GIOVANNI ANTONIO DA PORDENONE: ARTISTIC AMBITION AND THE CHALLENGE OF THE LOCAL

By

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A dissertation submitted to the Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Baltimore, Maryland
May 2015

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Abstract

This dissertation challenges how we understand the relationship between style and location in the case of the traveling painter Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone (ca. 1484–1539). In moving throughout northern Italy at the start of the Reformation era, this artist's style changed continuously and in ways that draw attention to how it departed from local artistic activity. Such stylistic volatility foregrounds the shortcomings of regionally-based taxonomies of style, making urgent the question of how to address the role of artistic migration in processes of individual and communal identity formation. Against a tradition of provincializing accounts that perpetuate old hierarchies of priority, this dissertation argues that Pordenone's religious paintings manifest critically self-aware, trans-regional adaptations of the *maniera moderna* that, when taken together, constituted a network by which the painter laid claim to recognition while increasing the interconnectedness of diverse artistic communities. The network of paintings Pordenone constructed stretched from the Slovenian border to the Ligurian coast, and thus challenges art historical expectations about the autochthonous link between style and geography.

Pordenone's relentless artistic experimentation calls attention to and transforms *Cinquecento* fictions of artistic self-representation, but it also can be read as an attempt to respond to the imperatives of religious reform. Such experimentation, I contend, exemplifies a consistent interest in testing the referential and affective potential of art to stimulate piety and mediate divine agency. The first chapter considers Pordenone's changing approach to altarpiece painting in his native city, arguing that the paintings he created for the church of San Marco are independent expressions of a mode

of visualizing sacred subjects that had been conceived in opposition to the works of Giorgione and Titian. By drawing analogies to examples of local dialect literature, I demonstrate how Pordenone's works deliberately "contaminate" the aesthetic ideals of his Venetian peers to assert his own distinctiveness and invite reflection on the reliability and efficacy of different conventions of altarpiece painting. The second chapter investigates how the artist compounded gruesome depictions of violence with a startlingly-invasive form of projective illusionism to solicit meditation on the representability of Christ's Passion in the murals he painted for Cremona cathedral. The third chapter concentrates on the central cupola Pordenone frescoed for the church of Santa Maria di Campagna in Piacenza. Here I argue that the various appropriations and oblique references that the paintings make to the works by Pordenone's Roman and Emilian contemporaries suggest a desire to stand out by means of a visual rhetoric of abundance. Such abundance is used to accentuate the dissimulative nature of sacred truth. The final chapter discusses how the painter's nomadic practice led to his marginalization in later sixteenth century art-theoretical and art-historical writing.

Advisor: Professor Stephen J. Campbell

Second Reader: Professor Mitchell B. Merback

Acknowledgments

Debts of gratitude are always a pleasure to pay, but some may never be fully resolved. Such a debt is owed to my advisor, Stephen J. Campbell, for whom I will always be minting new words of applause. With unfailing patience he guided me through every permutation of this project, challenging me in ways that I had never envisioned but always encouraging me to pursue my own lines of inquiry. Without his tutelage, I would never have sown the furrowed fields of Mars with dragon's teeth. I also wish to express my gratitude to Mitchell Merback for generously taking on the role of second reader. This dissertation has benefited greatly from his careful scrutiny and pointed criticism and I have learned much from heeding his counsel. Herbert Kessler also deserves special thanks. He offered invaluable advice during the project's earliest stages and the strength of many of the arguments put forth in these pages draws on his suggestions. I am equally indebted to Christopher Nygren for being there at every turn, detour, and blockade I encountered over the years of writing. His many insights and friendship have been instrumental in seeing this project evolve into its current state.

In the course of preparing this thesis I was aided in innumerable ways by a number of other teachers and mentors. I must thank Elizabeth Cropper and the deans of CASVA, David Alan Brown, Michael Koortbojian, Michael Fried, Alessandro Nova, Daniela Bohde, Hans Aurenhammer, Jeffrey Hamburger, Julian Gardner, Stuart and Estelle Lingo, Jenny Purtle, Cecilia Frosinini, and the members of my defense committee. The lessons imparted from these scholars are deeply embedded in this project, probably more so than I am aware. I must also single out the many friends and colleagues that have read and commented on parts of my work and/or provided assistance with translations,

including Denis Robichaud, Ruth Noyes, Laura Fenelli, Elisa Brilli, Meredith Raucher, Shana O'Connell, Anna Seastrand, and Dana Byrd.

In addition to the individuals who have made this project possible, I am indebted to numerous institutions. I could not have completed the dissertation without the assistance of the History of Art Department at Johns Hopkins and the financial support provided by a Cazel Fellowship, a Carrie M. Kurrelmeyer Fellowship, a Sadie and Louis Roth Fellowship, two summer travel fellowships awarded by the Charles S. Singleton Center, the Katzenellenbogen Memorial Prize, and a Dean's Teaching Fellowship. The Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts supported my research and writing with a Samuel H. Kress Pre-Doctoral Fellowship, which I spent in residence at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence, Italy, and at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. These institutions provided me with a period of sustained research and writing and the opportunity to refine my ideas within challenging intellectual environments. I would like to thank both institutions for their generous support of my scholarship.

This project also benefited from the support of numerous libraries and librarians but would like to extend my sincerest thanks to Don Juedes of the Milton S. Eisenhower Library and the staff at the Kunsthistorisches Institut and at Harvard's Villa I Tatti in Florence. I am especially grateful for the kindness and enthusiasm I encountered among the staff of the Biblioteca Statale di Cremona.

For their constant support and friendship I would like to thank Hana Gründler, Caroline Domenghino, Jennifer Sliwka, Jannette Vusich, Joyce Tsai, Kate Markoski, Hilary Hunt Letwin, Ittai Weinryb, Jamie Rosenow, Viveca A. Pattison, Arvi Wattel,

Lael Ensor, Ann Woodword, Matt Gilman, Christopher Bassett, Ken Pendergast, Brie Hayes, Cleo Hayes-Price, my brothers Joseph, Daniel, Nathaniel, and Paul, and my sister Katherine.

The gratitude I have for my parents and grandparents is incalculable. Their abiding faith in my abilities kept me rowing the boat even when I could not see the shore. This dissertation is dedicated to them.

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*All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

ILLUSTRATIONS

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation confronts the art historical problem of how we understand the relationship between style and location in the case of an artist who worked in numerous locations in the Veneto and northern Italy between 1504 and 1539. The career of Giovanni Antonio de' Sacchis (ca. 1484–1539), known as Pordenone, is marked by constant travel and a volatile artistic persona. Born in a geographically remote and politically-contested area of northwest Friuli, the painter journeyed as far east as Cividale near the Slovenian border and as far west as Genoa on the Ligurian coast (figures 1 and 2). Frescoes by his hand also survive in places as far south as Alviano in Umbria (figure 3) and the surviving documents reveal that he repeatedly traversed these areas in a cyclical pattern of migration before settling in Venice in 1535. There Pordenone swiftly rose to ascendency among the cultural elite to become Titian's most significant rival. In fact, during the late-1530s Pordenone achieved such renown that his art was poised to offer a viable alternative for the future of north Italian painting. Why, then, has this successful and widely-travelled painter been consigned to the margins of art history? I propose that this question relates directly to the much larger problem that artistic migration poses for the creation of regionally-based taxonomies of style and the continued reliance of art history on those taxonomies. The attraction of Pordenone's art for his north Italian patrons lay in their perception of a peripatetic creative enterprise and in a constant virtuosic self-transformation that refused to be defined as the reflection of a single place. In moving from one area to the next, the artist's pictorial character changed in ways that draw attention to how it departed from local spheres of artistic activity. This

is very different from the practices of such contemporaries as Palma Vecchio of Bergamo or Bonifazio de' Pitati of Verona, both working in Venice, who exported works in a normative and consistent style. Compared to these artists, Pordenone's relentless artistic transformation and itinerancy present an alternative career trajectory, one similar to that pursued by Lorenzo Lotto, Polidoro da Caravaggio, or Cesare da Sesto.[1] In fact, Pordenone's stylistic variability is such that the casual observer may be hard-pressed to identify the same hand in several of his works. Take, for example, the frescoes he painted in the vaults of San Lorenzo at Vacile (c. 1508) and in the cupola of the Malchiostro chapel (1520) in the duomo at Treviso (figures 4–6). The hard contours, wooden postures, and near absence of foreshortening that characterize the figures at Vacile bear little resemblance to the tumultuous interlacing mass of powerful bodies that threaten to tumble out of the painting at Treviso. The latter fresco was also carefully engineered, along with the murals that adorn the chapel's walls, to accentuate a stylistic disparity with the altarpiece by Titian that they surround (figures 6–9). The enormous, swelling forms and projective illusionism of Pordenone's figures have an aggressive, plastic presence and grand theatricality that is quite unlike the humility and sophisticated interiority of Titian's Virgin in the *Annunciation* altarpiece (figure 8). Oblivious to the spectator, Titian's Virgin calmly inclines herself to the sound of the heralding angel and the divine light that issues from a dark cloud behind her. The very lack of outward emotion suggests an intense state of introspection. Pordenone, by contrast, relies on openly demonstrative form. The hyperbolic proportions and sweeping gestures of God the Father in the cupola

[1] Pordenone's continual self-transformation also distinguishes him from artists such as Paris Bordone of Treviso, whose style remained essentially unchanged despite peregrinations to Vicenza, Crema, and Milan, as well as to Fontainebleau and Augsburg.

or the Christ child in the *Adoration of the Magi* (figures 6 and 9) externalize emotions with unreserved immediacy, giving these figures a sense of tumultuous drama. Pordenone's divergent means of rendering form and addressing the spectator can be seen as contributing to the stylistic multiplicity of the art produced in and for Treviso by other painters such as Francesco da Milano, Domenico Capriolo, Pier Maria Pennacchi, Lorenzo Lotto, and others. To be sure, the diversification of stylistic idioms in a given location is one of the principal consequences of Pordenone's migration. By increasing the heterogeneity of the various artistic circles he interacted with, Pordenone's works challenge modern art historical expectations about the alignment of style and location.[2]

Previous attempts to account for this problem do so by way of ill-defined conceptions of stylistic dissemination (or modernization) and explain the artist's stylistic volatility as a consequence of his "provincialism." Maria Calì, for example, has argued that what appears unusual or inconsistent in Pordenone's art should be "*interpretata come il ricordo delle asprezze montanare e delle fantasie accese e visionarie di un mondo di provinciale*" (interpreted as the memory of the rugged mountain dwellers and the vivid and visionary fantasies of a provincial world).[3] Even Charles Cohen, Pordenone's most

[2] Such expectations took hold at least as early as the sixteenth century and were given critical shape by a number of late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers, notably Giovan Battista Agucchi, who divided the history of Italian painting into the Roman, Venetian, Lombard, and Tuscan schools. Classification according to regional school took its most authoritative form in Luigi Lanzi's *Storia pittorica della Italia dal Risorgimento delle belle arti fin presso al fine del XVIII secolo* (1792-1796), which has had a lasting impact on modern scholarship of Italian art. As we shall see, Pordenone's stylistic volatility defies Lanzi's geo-political and stylistic criteria for belonging to a particular school. In fact, Lanzi's inclusion of Pordenone in the Venetian School does not rely on a consideration of specific works, but on Giorgio Vasari's characterization of the artist as a disciple of Giorgione (discussed in chapter 1). See Luigi Lanzi, *Storia pittorica...* , ed. Martino Capucci, New ed., 3 vols. (Florence: Sansoni, 1968-1974), II, pp. 57-59; III, pp. 156, 193. An annotated reprint of Agguchi's *Trattato della pittura* (1646) can be found in Denis Mahon, *Studies in Seicento Art and Theory* (London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1947), pp. 241-258.

[3] Maria Calì, "Patroni, committenti, amici del Pordenone fra religione e storia," in *Il Pordenone. Atti del convegno internazionale di studio, Pordenone, 23 – 25 agosto 1984*, ed. C. Furlan (Pordenone: Biblioteca

fervid modern advocate, interprets the artist as a "phenomenon of provincialism," describing him as an "outsider" who was "tied to an off-center cultural milieu."[4] Such characterizations, even when they disavow the pejorative sense of the word provincial, nevertheless imply an attitude of subservience to an externally enforced hierarchy of values or that the painter was unaware or simply unable to fully grasp what was at stake in the art created by his urban contemporaries.[5] Such an attitude in no way informs Pordenone's artistic production, which directly contended with that of Perino del Vaga, Correggio, and the Venetian vanguard. During his lifetime Pordenone provoked explicit comparison to Michelangelo and his paintings along the Grand Canal in Venice were singled out by his contemporaries as one of the five artistic marvels of the *Serenissima*.[6] Accordingly, this dissertation argues that Pordenone knowingly and self-consciously made use of diverse artistic traditions and his own *ingegno* in ways that invalidate the perception of his creative practice as benighted or disengaged from contemporary debates about the status and function of religious painting and the role of the professional artist.[7]

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dell'immagine, 1985), pp. 93-101 (p. 97). Such scholarship implicitly upholds views associated with the early twentieth-century discourse of *Kunstgeographie* and its misguided affiliation of artistic creation with the ethnic and even racial aspects that were thought to determine a person's geographical situation. For a critique of this discourse see Thomas DaCosta Kauffman, "Introduction," in *Time and Place: the Geohistory of Art*, eds. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann and Elizabeth Pilliod (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 1-19 (esp. pp. 4-5).

[4] Charles Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone: Between Dialect and Language*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), I, pp. xiv, 4.

[5] Cf. Terry Smith, "The Provincialism Problem," *Artforum*, v. 13 (1974), pp. 54-59; and Alessandro Nova, "Centro, periferia, provincia: Tiziano e Romanino," in *Romanino: un pittore in rivolta nel Rinascimento italiano*, eds. Lia Camerlengo and Ezio Chini, Exh. Cat. Trento, Castello del Buonconsiglio, 29 luglio – 29 ottobre 2006 (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan: Silvana, 2006), pp. 48-67 (esp. p. 49).

[6] For the comparison to Michelangelo, see Lodovico Dolce, *Dieci canti di Sacripante di M. Lodovico Dolce quali seguitano Orlando Furioso novamente ristampati, historiati & con ogni diligentia corretti*, s. l., 1537, fol. 2v; reproduced in Michel Hochmann, *Venise et Rome 1500-1600: deux écoles de peinture et leurs échanges* (Geneva: Droz, 2004), p. 45 n. 7. For the inclusion of Pordenone's facade frescoes among the wonders of Venetian art, see Anton Francesco Doni's *Disegno del Doni: partito in piv ragionamenti, ne qvali si tratta della scoltvra et pittvra*... (Venice: Gabriel Giolito di Ferrarii, 1549), pp. 51v–52r.

[7] The idea that Pordenone's paintings (which often play upon the quotidian and grotesque) were intended to satisfy some kind of *popolaresco* (folk/naïve) taste or mentality is also misleading for it relies on an

In some ways then this study contributes to the paradoxical centering of marginality within the discipline of art history.[8] In the past few decades the eccentric or non-normative has itself become normative of Renaissance art history, but the aim of this project is to do more than simply draw attention to an "outsider" artist more or less neglected by official or establishment art history. A growing awareness of the stylistic multiplicity of early modern Italian art has foregrounded the shortcomings of previous geographical classifications and its hierarchies, making urgent the questions of how to address the role of artistic migration in processes of identity formation, in the production of place, and in the spread of doctrinal reform.

The idea that style might be context-dependent or "indexical to times and places"[9] and thus capable of being depicted or cited as such became increasingly meaningful during the course of Pordenone's career. However, the regional mapping of styles according to a hierarchy that identified artistic innovation with the cities of Rome, Florence, and Venice only came into existence later with the publication of Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* (1550 and 1568) and with the subsequent critical backlash that it engendered.[10] For Vasari, artistic mobility was not only necessary for professional success, but also essential to the historical paradigm of artistic evolution that his *Lives* espoused. Artists could not realize their full potential unless they traveled, but the

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oversimplification that equates coarseness with non-privileged classes, overlooking the fact that this characterization was imposed on the culture of the subordinate classes by the elite and that the upper echelon often shared similar values.

[8] Cf. Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, "The Uses and Abuse of Peripheries in Art History," *Artl@s Bulletin*, v. 3, is. 1 (2014), pp. 4-7.

[9] Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), p. 35.

[10] See Stephen J. Campbell, "Artistic Geographies," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Italian Renaissance*, ed. Michael Wyatt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 17-39, esp. pp. 18-19.

trajectory that Vasari advocated was resolutely narrow and granted supremacy to Tuscan-Roman art.[11] Only in Rome could aspiring artists witness the greatest achievements of the Central Italian *maniera moderna* and contribute to its dissemination. Pordenone, as an itinerant north Italian painter who had achieved the "greatest fame," but "without seeing Rome, Florence, or other places full of notable pictures," presented a real problem.[12] Not only was he admired, but Pordenone's works – unlike those of his renowned peers, e.g., Michelangelo, Raphael, (early) Titian, and Veronese – did not embody a strong sense of emplacement or *Ortstil.*[13] The artistic canon that Vasari's *Lives* inaugurated relied on stabilizing a relationship between style and place. When faced with a migratory painter who did not follow his itinerary, Vasari chose to reduce Pordenone to an imitator of Giorgione who, despite his rivalry with Titian, was inferior to Tuscan artists like Domenico Beccafumi.[14] As I will soon demonstrate, the challenge that Pordenone's migratory activity brought to Vasari's regionalist agenda brought about adverse consequences that ultimately diminished the artist's prestige and prompted his marginalization in subsequent art theoretical and historiographic literature.

One of my objectives is to offer an account of how migration impacted Pordenone's artistic self-definition without anachronistically projecting the style taxonomies that developed in later art historiography. In the course of Pordenone's

[11] Artists who followed other trajectories were often considered deficient, providing negative examples of a stubborn provincialism. See, for example, Vasari's evaluation of Antonio Allegri da Correggio in *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori* (1568), ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence: Sansoni, 1906), IV, p. 112.

[12] "*...fama grandissima*," Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de piu eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani, da Cimabue insino a' tempi nostri* (1550), ed. Corrado Ricci, 4 vols. (Milan; Rome: Bestetti e Tumminelli, 1927), IV, p. 237. "*...senza veder Roma, Fiorenza, o altri luoghi pieni di notabili pitture...*" Idem, *Le vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, V, p. 103.

[13] For the concept of *Ortstil*, or style of place, see Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Toward a Geography of Art* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2004), p. 154.

[14] Vasari, *Le Vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, V, p. 111, 117-118.

career, the recognition of regional styles was only emerging and such recognition was relative and pluralistic. As Ferdinando Bologna has argued, during the fifteenth and early sixteenth century there was no dominant pictorial language in Italy (as Vasari, Lodovico Dolce, and other late-*Cinquecento* writers would have us believe), but there is evidence of belief in the parity of perfections.[15] One of the most well-known articulations of this opinion was disseminated by Baldassare Castiglione in his *Libro del Cortegiano* (begun 1508; published 1528):

> "Now then in painting Leonardo da Vinci, Mantegna, Raphael, Michelangelo, Giorgione are the most excellent: nonetheless, all are unlike one another in their work, so that in his own manner not one of them seems to lack anything, because each is known in his own style to be most perfect."[16]

Attempts to render a more historically precise understanding of Italy's artistic cultures at the start of the sixteenth century must not automatically assume the predominance of a Florentine or Venetian manner. Such styles (which were dynamic and permeable) offered an array of options that astute artists could employ, alter, or ignore to suit their needs. Pordenone's paintings reveal an awareness of the techniques and functions of art in Germany, Central Italy, the Veneto, Emilia, and Lombardy. His paintings exhibit significant technical innovations, critical discrimination, and a consistent interest in

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[15] Ferdinando Bologna, *La coscienza storica dell'arte d'Italia: introduzione alla "Storia dell'arte in Italia"* (Turin: UTET, 1982), esp. pp. 69-80.

[16] "*Eccovi che nella pittura sono eccellentissimi Leonardo Vincio, il Mantegna, Rafaello, Michel Angelo, Georgio da Castel Franco: nientedimeno, tutti son tra sé nel far dissimili, di modo che ad alcun di loro non par che manchi cosa alcuna in quella maniera, perché si conosce ciascun nel suo stilo esser perfettissimo*." Baldassare Castiglione, *Il cortegiano* (1528), ed. Silvano Del Missier (Novara: Istituto geografico de Agostini, 1968), bk. I, XXXVII, p. 105. Leonardo Bruni made an analogous statement when he defended Dante's use of the vernacular: "Each language has its own particular perfection, its own euphony, its own polished and artistic utterance." See Leonardo Bruni's *Life of Dante*, appended to Giovanni Boccaccio, *Life of Dante*, trans. Philip Wicksteed, rev. ed. (London: Oneworld Classics, 2009), pp. 87-99 (p. 97 for the quote).

testing the sustainability of traditional conventions of Western religious painting. The results, in my opinion, often appear anti-synthetic or deliberately unresolved, but in ways that cannot be adequately described as *anticlassico* or mannerist.

Beginning with the scholarship of Roberto Longhi (1934), Pordenone has been considered one of the "*grandi capitani delle nuove tendenze anticlassiche*" (great captains of the new anticlassical trends).[17] Such artists – which Longhi identified as provincials and vagabonds – abandoned the equilibrium of classical art, deformed ancient local models, were deliberately archaic and deserted the "*classicismo cromatico*" of Giorgione and the young Titian.[18] Besides the highly problematic claim that the manifestation of this antinomy was a sign both of melancholic temperament and the moral inquietude of the times, the dichotomizing logic of *classico*/*anticlassico* limits interpretation to a simplistic opposition.[19] Notwithstanding attempts to utilize the binary in less rigidly dialectical terms or even redefine *anti-classicismo* as "an attitude of playful disrespect which could coexist with admiration for the canon" (whatever that canon was in the early sixteenth century), the antinomy does little to explain the volatile nature of Pordenone's creative practice or how the products of that practice address the representational efficacy of paintings, especially sacred images.[20]

Similarly, studies that invoke the concept of Mannerism impose a dialectic with a normative Renaissance art, and one in which the former is typically charged with the

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[17] Roberto Longhi, "Officina ferrarese" (1934), in *Edizione delle opera complete di Roberto Longhi*, 14 vols. (Florence: Sansoni, 1956), V, p. 84.
[18] Ibid., V, p. 84; and Roberto Longhi, "Ampliamenti nell'officina ferrarese" (1940), in *Edizione delle opere complete di Roberto Longhi,* V, p. 151.
[19] Longhi, "Ampliamenti nell'officina ferrarese," V, p. 150.
[20] Peter Burke, *The European Renaissance: Centers and Peripheries* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), p. 76. Cf. Antonio Pinelli, "La maniera: definizione di campo e modelli di lettura," in *Storia dell'arte italiana*, ed. Federico Zeri (Turin: Giulio Einaudi, 1981), pt. 2, v. 2, pp. 87-181, esp. pp. 109-115.

negative connotations of artistic decline after the death of Raphael, vacuous affectation, and the propagation of style over content.[21] Such connotations are historically inappropriate and even while some scholars have interpreted the willfully artful and post-naturalistic modes of representation that flourished in the early sixteenth century without prejudice, mannerist art is customarily interpreted as a symptom of some other phenomena such a socio-economic or philosophical crisis.[22] For these reasons, I disregard the term Mannerism. Its value as a heuristic tool is also limited by the fact that scholars invested in the label rarely consider image-making outside of Rome, Florence, Venice, or the French court at Fontainebleau.[23] By contrast, this dissertation pursues alternative ways of thinking about artistic transmission and transformative emulation that challenge past hierarchies that grant priority to the art produced in urban centers. The act of traveling to smaller cities and townships should not automatically be seen as owing to financial constraint or as artistically self-marginalizing. Nor should Pordenone's artistic activity in rural areas be unduly simplified as a diffusion of the Venetian modern manner to the provinces. The range of imitative resources that underlies his creative output defies such categorization. How, then, should we assess the unruly products of Pordenone's

[21] See, for example, Marcia Hall, *After Raphael: Painting in Central Italy in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), esp. pp. xii-xv, 5-11; Elizabeth Cropper, "Introduction," in Craig Hugh Smyth, *Mannerism and Maniera* (Vienna: IRSA, 1992), pp. 12-21; John Shearman, *Mannerism*, ed. John Fleming and Hugh Honor (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967); and Sydney J. Freedberg, *Parmigianino: His Works in Painting* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950). Freedberg's suggestion that "Parmigianino's figures are an assemblage of surfaces; nothing is contained within these surfaces" (p. 14) makes a claim for action without purpose that is both adverse and anachronistic.

[22] Cf. Arnold Hauser, *Mannerism: the Crisis of the Renaissance and the Origin of Modern Art*, trans. Eric Mosbacher (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986); and Erwin Panofsky, *Idea: a Concept in Art Theory* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1968).

[23] For a discussion of the art of Fontainebleau see Rebecca Zorach, *Blood, Milk, Ink, Gold: Abundance and Excess in the French Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

artistic migration within the specific social sites they occupy and in relation to the larger religious, political, and artistic pressures that conditioned their creation?

One of the most influential attempts to account for the transmission of artistic ideas, techniques, objects, and their creators in Italy remains Enrico Castelnuovo's and Carlo Ginzburg's revision of the center and periphery paradigm (1979).[24] Building on sociological approaches from the mid-1970s, these authors presented an alternative schema in addition to a history of art characterized by a sequence of urban centers where artistic styles and ideas were produced and exported to peripheries where they were passively adopted.[25] While they elaborate on the diverse means by which centers exert dominion over peripheries, these authors also describe artistic exchange and stylistic diffusion in terms of conflict. The periphery, in their account, is not always characterized by "cultural bondage," delayed artistic development and repetition, but may also be a place (geographical or conceptual) with the potential for creative alternatives, expressive liberty, innovation, and opposition to the "influence" of the center.[26] Within this schema, much of the art Pordenone created during his travels can be seen as a manifestation of creative resistance and in many cases this is how I have chosen to characterize his

[24] Enrico Castelnuovo and Carlo Ginzburg, "Centro e periferia" in *Storia dell'arte italiana*, ed. Giovanni Previtali (Turin: Einaudi, 1979), pt. 1, v. 1, pp. 283-352; later translated into English as "Center and Periphery," in *History of Italian Art*, preface by Peter Burke, trans. Ellen Bianchini and Claire Dorey, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), I, pp. 29-113. See also Idem, "Symbolic Domination and Artistic Geography in Italian Art History," trans. Maylis Curie, *Art in Translation*, v. 1, n. 1 (2009), pp. 5-48; originally published as "Domination symbolique et géographie artistique dans l'histoire de l'art italien," *Acts de la recherche en sciences sociales*, n. 40 (November 1981), pp. 51-72.

[25] The authors explicitly critique the model of passive diffusion described by Kenneth Clark in *Provincialism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 3; and the consensual model proposed by the sociologist Edward Shils, *Center and Periphery. Essays in Macrosociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975). See Castelnuovo and Ginzburg, "Centro e periferia," p. 286, nts. 3 & 4.

[26] Castelnuovo and Ginzburg, "Centre and Periphery," p. 30. For the inadequacy of the term "influence" to describe stylistic diffusion and "its wrong-headed grammatical prejudice about who is the agent and who the patient," see Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention*: *On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), esp. pp. 58-62 (pp. 58-59 for the quote).

artworks. Unfortunately, Castelnuovo and Ginzburg do not dwell on such instances. Instead they point to a gradual transformation in Italy's artistic geography, arguing that the polycentricity of Italy's artistic cultures was drastically reduced in the *Cinquecento* by the imposition of Vasari's *terza maniera* and what they identify as the peripheralization of Italy's artistic production in relation to Florence, Rome, and Venice.[27] This argument, which relies on the impact of Vasari's view of artistic geography, has made a lasting impact on scholars of Renaissance art. Nevertheless, Castelnuovo and Ginzburg do not adequately account for the possibility that itinerant craftsmen may *not* have functioned as transmitters of a center's authority. As we shall see, Pordenone was by no means an uncritical purveyor of Venetian artistic values, nor should his later engagement with Central Italian and transalpine pictorial conceits be understood as a simple counter-weight to Venetian art. Any sustained examination of his paintings reveals a calculated, context-dependent negotiation of diverse artistic values that undermines the dynamic of dependency that the center/periphery model imposes. This is to say that the model can improperly reduce the variability of artistic interaction to a matter of generic power relations.

For these and other reasons, Castelnuovo and Ginsburg's essay has come in for criticism. Drawing on World Systems theory,[28] Nicolas Bock sought to reevaluate the frequently neglected city of Naples within "an international cultural web" by emphasizing the role of consumption over production and the freedom of choice in

[27] Castelnuovo and Ginzburg, "Centro e periferia," pp. 316-317, 320-321, 326-328. Campbell suggests that the process of peripheralization identified by Castelnuovo and Ginzburg can be seen as a contested ideological process and one already beginning to make itself felt in the late fifteenth century. See Campbell, "Artistic Geographies," pp. 32 & 39.

[28] E.g., Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1976).

defining centrality.[29] According to this theory, the importation of nonlocal artists by Neapolitan patrons is not considered a sign of dependency or as undermining a robust local identity but as a form of cultural enrichment. This is an important modification of the center/periphery model as proposed by Castelnuovo and Ginzburg for it emphasizes the role of migratory painters as catalysts for local innovation and as indicators of modernity rather than as cultural exports operating as forms of "symbolic domination."[30] That said, Bock's macro-scale approach and insistence on patronage patterns undermines the agency of individual artists and their own processes of self-promotion and meaning-making, which is the focus of this dissertation. For this reason, Stephen Campbell's scholarship, which highlights the role that artists played in the production and critique of regional hierarchies of artistic value, plays a much more significant part in what follows.[31] In describing the dynamics of regional identity formation in early modern Italy, Campbell questions the applicability of the center/periphery paradigm as a model for analysis and throws doubt on the possibility of associating the periphery with a specific geographical designation. Artistic centers and peripheries are relativistic concepts[32] and their relationship, Campbell proposes, can be more productively conceived as "a dynamic of historical thought and practice, as an ideology which artists

[29] Nicolas Bock, "Patronage, Standards and Transfert Culturel: Naples between Art History and Social Science Theory," *Art History*, v. 31, n. 4 (2008), pp. 574-597 (p. 591). See also Nicolas Bock, "Center or Periphery? Artistic Migration, Models, Taste and Standards," in *«Napoli è tutto il mondo» Neapolitan Art and Culture from Humanism to the Enlightenment*, ed. Livio Pestilli, Ingrid D. Rowland, and Sebastiano Schütze, International Conference, Rome, 19 – 21 June 2003 (Pisa: Serra, 2008), pp. 11-36.
[30] See Nicolas Bock, "Center or Periphery? Artistic Migration, Models, Taste and Standards," p. 12.
[31] See note 10 above.
[32] Scholarship that stresses this aspect includes Nova, "Centro, periferia, provincia: Tiziano e Romanino," pp. 48-67; Aislinn Loconte, "The North looks South: Giorgio Vasari and Early Modern Visual Culture in the Kingdom of Naples," *Art History*, v. 31, is. 4 (2008), pp. 438-459; and Mary Vaccaro, "Correggio and Parmigianino: On the Place of Rome in the Historiography of Sixteenth-Century Parmese Drawing," *Artibus et Historiae*, v. 30, n. 59 (2009), pp. 115-124.

might extend, transform, or undermine through their work."[33] This particular understanding of center and periphery has informed much of my thinking about Pordenone's migratory practice. When the center/periphery model is extended beyond geography and pursued as a mobilized, conceptual relationship it becomes more useful as a means of understanding how artists may have perceived and responded to different traditions of image-making and their practitioners. However, it remains only one way of interpreting artistic interaction and transmission. As Campbell notes, an artist's choice of resources need not be seen in hegemonic terms. What might be interpreted as an act of "self-peripheralization" within the parameters of the center/periphery model, e.g., Castelnuovo's and Ginzburg's account of how Vasari viewed Jacopo da Pontormo's use of Germanic artistic models, may in fact be a deliberate attempt by an artist to operate within a transregional network and extend localized norms of practice.[34] Drawing on these premises, this dissertation presents an investigation of how a single painter's activity built new circuits of artistic exchange that extended well beyond the Po Valley and resists explication by recourse to hierarchical dynamics of interaction.

Circulating between different configurations of meaning and power enables different modes of knowing and representation. Pordenone's paintings make strategic reference to varied artistic models, employing a range of self-differentiating tactics that articulate an awareness of, but not complete alignment with, many of the leading styles and pictorial languages of Italy and transalpine Europe. Such tactics highlight the reactive dimension of artistic creation and a desire, not unlike Pontormo's, to extend artistic

[33] Campbell, "Artistic Geographies," p. 39.
[34] Ibid., p. 36. See also Castelnuovo and Ginzburg, "centro e periferia," p. 324.

norms. It also represents an attempt to cope with artistic phenomena that are directly related to a locale, while circulating in, outside, and around it.

In order to better understand the role of the local in Pordenone's art, I have drawn on social theories of space that define historical place not as a fixed point or passive container, but as process.[35] A given place, in this sense, is not understood as embodying some autonomous *genius loci*, but as relative and relational, formed by its connectivity to something and somewhere else.[36] Such connectivity can shape commonalities but also generate awareness of difference and, in this case, such awareness is explored within the socio-cultural terrain of Renaissance Italy.[37] The local, then, is not determined solely by geography or climate, but also by the actions of social mediation and mediators. This study considers how Pordenone's religious paintings operated as social mediators; that is, how they contributed to the local by producing a place of interaction. Each painting embodies and gives form to social relations – between worshippers and between worshippers and the represented divine – and each painting also creates relations to artworks elsewhere. At the same time, this study treats the products of Pordenone's creative undertakings as vehicles for individual agency and self-promotion. This is to say that in addition to considering how Pordenone's audience may have thought about his art

[35] The most important example being Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991). Other studies essential to my thinking about space in social life include Michel Foucault, "Des Espace Autres," *Architecture/Mouvement/Continuité* (October 1984), pp. 46-49; Edward Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993); Idem, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Edward Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1996); Barney Warf, "From Surfaces to Networks," in *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, eds. B. Warf and S. Arias (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 59-76; and Charles W. J. Withers, "Place and the 'Spatial Turn' in Geography and in History," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, v. 79, n. 4 (2009), pp. 637-665.

[36] Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, p. 278.

[37] Particularly helpful for thinking about how perceptions of "sameness" and "difference" operate within processes of cultural development on both a local and global scale is Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Public Culture*, v. 2, n. 2 (1990), pp. 1-24.

and utilized it for religious practices, I also explore his paintings as formalized self-displays of virtuosity by which the artist made a bid for local preeminence. Pordenone's preoccupation with drawing analogies between pictorial and divine presence, for example, is explored both as a means of generating devotional attention and as a means of elevating the status of the artist. From this point of view, I attempt to define the historical, cultural, and artistic boundaries that provided the ground for Pordenone's artistic self-definition and investigate how localized spheres of artistic practice operated as resources for negotiating the artistic and theological imperatives of Christian image-making at the start of the Reformation.

In traveling from place to place, Pordenone's paintings increased the interconnectedness of varied artistic spheres and distant places, but without necessarily anchoring them to nonlocal ideological commitments. The paintings investigated in this study range from Emilia to the Friuli, constituting an artist-activated network by which Pordenone laid claim to recognition and participated in the development of localized art practices.[38] Conceived as a lateral model of relations, the network these objects create tie urban and rural locales together in ways that undercut the bias that links artistic innovation to centers of political and cultural eminence. By charting Pordenone's creative enterprise outside of the major socio-economic centers of early modern Italy, this network also contributes to the production of alternative conceptual maps of Italian Renaissance art. When freed of the ideological manipulation of provincializing accounts,

[38] In thinking about how artworks can embody a form of social circulation that does not depart from the local, the writings of Bruno Latour, John Law, and Michel Callon have been beneficial. See the essays in John Law and John Hassard, eds., *Actor Network Theory and After* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999); and Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

the products of Pordenone's creative enterprise reveal critically self-aware, trans-regional adaptations of the modern manner. These adaptations are treated here as performances of artistic persona, rather than as expressions of the artist's temperament or personality. This persona is mutable, but can be recognized as a set of distinctive effects and self-reflective gestures that call attention to and transform *Cinquecento* fictions of artistic self-representation.

Such effects and gestures are explored here as the means by which Pordenone differentiated his works from those of his peers, but also for what they reveal about the changing conditions of religious painting in the early sixteenth century. Starting in the mid-1510s, Pordenone's career became conspicuously marked by a process of self-differentiation that I will propose is best understood as a calculated form of "contaminate imitation."[39] Such imitation reveals the trans-regional scope of Pordenone's paintings, but it can also help account for how the artist sought to enhance the perceived efficacy of religious images. As discussed in the first chapter, contamination is inherent to all forms of imitation (conscious or otherwise). What distinguishes Pordenone's contamination of diverse styles, pictorial conventions, and conceits is the adversarial character of its performance and the manifestly composite or anti-synthetic quality of its results. Unlike Raphael, who was praised for synthesizing the styles of his predecessors into a unified

[39] Cf. Thomas Greene's four types of humanist imitation in *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982), pp. 38-48; and Elizabeth Cropper's discussion of Greene's categories in *The Domenichino Affair: Novelty, Imitation, and Theft in Seventeenth-Century Rome* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 100-102. See also G. W. Pigman III's discussion of transformative, dissimulative, and eristic imitation in "Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance," *Renaissance Quarterly*, v. 33, n. 1 (1980), pp. 1-32. David Kim discusses artistic contamination, but only in the context of Vasari's *Vite* and as tied to negative biological connotations and its potential for endangering civic ideals. See Idem, *The Traveling Artist in the Italian Renaissance: Geography, Mobility, Style* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), chapter 2, esp. pp. 46-49.

idiom, Pordenone allowed formal and conceptual contradictions to resonate in his paintings.[40] Such contradictions suggest an artist less interested in the seamless harmonization of sources and more in the potential of discordant combinations – as a process of bringing heterogeneous elements into contact – to enrich the interpretative possibilities of religious art.[41] Such artifice compels decipherment just as it frustrates conclusions. In this sense, the difficulty we encounter in interpreting the incongruous thematic juxtapositions, spatial confusions, and other incongruities of Pordenone's paintings is not a failure of the artist, but rather stresses the importance of referential ambiguity for generating discourse among historic beholders on the inscrutability of the divine and the vitality of art's mediating status. It must be stressed that Pordenone's contaminate practice is not the pictorial equivalent of a native, Friulian plurilingualism and that it resists characterization as a trivial game of combinations. Moreover, by employing the term contamination I do not wish to rehash past characterizations of Pordenone as a "hybrid" painter, for such depictions tacitly imply that his works are the sum of passively adopted "influences" from elsewhere.[42] Instead, I employ the term to describe a form of invention, one that reflects on the boundaries between different modes of religious image-making and their respective possibilities.

It is often noted that by the start of the sixteenth century the growing tension between the role of images to promulgate doctrine and the claims of "art" for the individual imagination had begun to destabilize the conventional orientation for

[40] For Raphael, see Vasari, *Le Vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, IV, pp. 325-327, 339.
[41] For a discussion of how contamination can enhance interpretive possibilities, see Dennis Looney, *Compromising the Classics: Romance Epic Narrative in the Italian Renaissance* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996), pp. 19-26.
[42] Cf. Charles Cohen, "Pordenone's Cremona Passion Scenes and German Art," *Arte Lombarda*, v. 42/43 (1975), pp. 74-96.

understanding the relationship between an image and its referent.[43] Recent scholarship has addressed the sustainability of traditional functions of the image in times when artists lay claim to an "author" function and art is conceived increasingly in terms of poetry and rhetoric.[44] During the course of Pordenone's career, artists were adapting in novel and, as of yet, unregulated ways to the issue of the presence and representation of Christ while simultaneously asserting the value of artistic interest. In this context, works of art were often treated as testing grounds on which the conditions of different styles, visual tropes, levels of address, etc. could be worked out and compared. That said, I do not believe that such examinations were a "rehearsal…for the real and sometimes brutal dismantlings and displacements that would occur in the Protestant Reformation."[45] In the case of Pordenone's art, different forms of religious image-making are brought together as a way of testing and reanimating the affective power of pictorial fictions and how those fictions could serve the ends of Christian doctrine.

One of the most recognizable (and perhaps predictable) dynamics operating in Pordenone's art is the combination of powerfully affective illusionism with subtle self-

[43] The studies by the following scholars have made the most significant impact on my understanding of this problem: Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 338-351; Sylvia Ferino Pagden, "From Cult Images to the Cult of Images: the Case of Raphael's Altarpieces," in *The Altarpiece in the Renaissance*, eds. P. Humfrey and M. Kemp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 165-189; Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. E. Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 458-490; Klaus Krüger, *Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren: ästhetische Illusion in der Kunst der frühen Neuzeit in Italien* (Munich: W. Fink, 2001); Joseph L. Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Alexander Nagel, *Michelangelo and the Reform of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Idem, "Experiments in Art and Reform in Italy in the Early Sixteenth Century," in *The Pontificate of Clement VII: History, Politics, Culture*, eds. K. Goewens and S. Reiss (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 385-409; Idem, *The Controversy of Renaissance Art* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011); as well as the essays in Michael Cole and Rebecca Zorach, eds., *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions and the Early Modern World* (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009).

[44] See, for example, Stephen J. Campbell, "Renaissance Naturalism and the Jewish Bible: Ferrara, Brescia, Bergamo, 1520-1540," in *Judaism and Christian Art: Aesthetic Anxieties from the Catacombs to Colonialism*, eds. Herbert L. Kessler and David Nirenberg (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), pp. 291-327, esp. pp. 295-296; Nagel, *The Controversy of Renaissance Art*, passim.

[45] Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, p. 235.

reflexive devices that undermine the mimetic transparency of the illusion and point to the artist's craft.[46] Such devices should not be seen as part of a struggle to liberate art from Christian cult or to undermine traditional subject matter in order to privilege "art" and its process of becoming as the sole subject of representation.[47] In fact, it is unlikely that Pordenone and his north Italian contemporaries would have seen much of a dilemma between serving the theological imperatives of Christian image-making and the self-promotional aims of the professional artist.[48] Instead, the devices that Pordenone often employed to disrupt narrative coherency and the principle of verisimilitude can be seen as an attempt to negotiate – even underscore – the age-old conflict between the imageless ideal of religious devotion and the material reality of painting. Such imagery, I will argue, pursues the ends of doctrinal reform while allowing an authorial persona to emerge.

Pordenone's strategy of imitation manifests itself in diverse ways, three of which are addressed here in chapters organized by image-type and place: altarpieces in his native city, mural paintings in Cremona, and dome frescoes in Piacenza. The first chapter considers Pordenone's changing approach to altarpiece-painting following the annexation of his hometown to the Venetian mainland. Here I argue that the two altarpieces he created for the local church of San Marco, completed between 1515-16 and 1533-35, are independent expressions of a mode of visualizing sacred subjects that had been conceived in opposition to the works of his Venetian peers, particularly those of Giorgione and

[46] Cf. what Bret Rothstein calls "paradoxical mimesis" in *Sight and Spirituality in Early Netherlandish Painting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 175.
[47] Cf. Joost Keizer, "Michelangelo, Drawing, and the Subject of Art," *Art Bulletin*, v. 93, n. 3 (2011), pp. 304-324.
[48] Campbell makes a similar observation about Garofalo in "Renaissance Naturalism and the Jewish Bible," p. 296.

Titian. By drawing analogies to examples of local dialect literature, I demonstrate how Pordenone's works deliberately "contaminate" the creative practices and conventions of decorum propagated by Venetian painters. Utilizing a number of boldly satirical features and uncanny juxtapositions, such as the mélange of pastoral *topoi* with coarse, indecorous details, Pordenone's altarpieces reflect the oppositional potential of a contaminate aesthetics and resist characterization as provincial or naïve adaptations of his peers' styles. As the two most conspicuous decorations of the church, Pordenone's altarpieces could be seen as an attempt to distinguish San Marco – the city's leading ecclesiastical institution – as a place of creative resistance. However, they also chart the extent to which the artist pushed the inventive possibilities of this image-type as a means of stimulating piety and mediating divine agency. During a period in which there was no prescriptive theory of religious art, Pordenone's altarpieces reveal the complexity underlying the problem of conveying the truth of the Gospel within a stylistic polemic of self-promotion.

The second chapter investigates the five scenes of Christ's Passion (1520-22) that Pordenone contributed to the walls and interior façade of Cremona cathedral. These paintings were part of a massive fresco program executed by a series of local and nonlocal painters who worked in a variety of distinct styles. What distinguishes Pordenone's scenes is the means by which he compounds gruesome depictions of violence with a new and startlingly-invasive form of outward-projecting illusionism. By exploiting the incongruous link between holiness and disfigurement, Pordenone frescoes confront viewers with revolting images of Jesus' suffering in order to challenge them to see beyond Christ's disfigured corporeality. This challenge is magnified, moreover, by

projecting figures beyond the picture frame in an illusionistic overflowing of sacred history into the space of the church. Such transgressions of the picture frame call into question traditional assumptions regarding the relation of image and beholder and the potential of art to transcend distinctions between fiction and reality. In exploring how the artist's intrusive illusions affect the exigencies of beholding, this chapter demonstrates how the manipulation of spatial ambivalence can operate as a powerful means of soliciting reflection on the representability of Christ's Passion and one's conviction in its truth. Inflected by the eschatological precepts of the Christian faith and directed against foreign and local competitors, Pordenone's scenes at Cremona cathedral are unlike anything ever accomplished before in large-scale Italian paintings of the Passion.

The third chapter concentrates on the central cupola Pordenone frescoed for the church of Santa Maria di Campagna in Piacenza (1530-32). Here Pordenone renovated a local idiom of dome decoration with a distinctly Roman pedigree. Discarding the projective illusionism he employed at Cremona, Pordenone utilized a faux-architectural structure that organizes the dome into a network of framed fields with different levels of pictorial realism. This idiom both recognizes and departs from the innovations that the leading Emilian painters had developed in the painted domes of nearby Parma. Whereas these artists painted unified visions of heaven's infinite expanse, Pordenone intercepted the suggestion of limitless recession with a framework crowded with grotesques and vignettes from biblical and Roman history. In fact, the marginal imagery is granted such prominence as to call into question the very status of such artifice for visualizing Christian truth. In this chapter, I argue that the profusion of visual stimuli and the lack of typological and thematic coherence between the decorations is a calculated choice, one

intended to assert both the dissimulative nature of sacred truth and the artist's creative inexhaustibility. In attempting to negotiate the coexistence of monumental form and ornamental profusion, the various appropriations and oblique references that Pordenone's paintings make to the works of his Roman and Emilian contemporaries suggests a desire to excel by means of a visual rhetoric of abundance (*copia*). Such use of *copia* not only differentiates the artist's paintings from those by local competitors but also contributes to the glorification of the church's miracle-working statue, the *Madonna di Campagna*. Situated directly above the cult statue, Pordenone's frescoes extol the *Madonna* with a celebration of the diversity of God's creation, but there is something more at stake: several of the painted figures fervidly reach out to the miraculous effigy below, articulating a visual axis between Pordenone's animated illusions and an object of "real" animation. The cross-spatial relationship that Pordenone's paintings construct with the cult object could be said to reflect a desire to extend the aura of the miraculous image and participate in the supernatural essence that acts through it.

The concluding chapter is presented as an initial effort to understand the marginalization of Pordenone's art in later sixteenth century art-theoretical and art historical-writing. Initially praised by Venetian authors as Titian's chief rival in the 1530s, Pordenone was all but eliminated from the discourse of Venetian art in the later sixteenth century. I believe this is because his rivalry with Titian was read largely in terms of his supposed "Michelangelism," suggesting that the criticism and neglect his art later received from Venetian writers was intended to serve as a foil to enhance Titian's reputation in the face of Central Italian art and the claims of Vasari and other *literati* for its superiority. While Pordenone does receive sporadic mention in Venetian literature of

the later sixteenth century, it is not until the mid-seventeenth century that his paintings are once again praised in the service of Venetian cultural hegemony. By that point, however, Pordenone had become little more than a footnote to the triumph of Venetian art. Equally curious is the near absence of any discussion of Pordenone by writers of the art of Cremona and Piacenza. For example, in his *Discorso intorno alla scoltura e pittura* (1584) the Cremonese writer Alessandro Lamo omits all mention of the tremendous impact Pordenone had on the Campi family and their cohort. Instead, Pordenone's importance for the development of Cremonese painting is restricted to the art of Camillo Boccaccino, for which Lamo, oddly enough, cites Vasari.[49] It appears, then, that in wishing to celebrate his local artistic heritage, Lamo did so in a way that masked the indigenization of imported artistic models. Preoccupied with regional difference, writers such as Lamo emphasized the independence of local artists, but in doing so they disassociated (and consequently undermined) the position of their locales within larger networks of cultural flow.

The range of imitative reference and oppositional tactics that subtend Pordenone's unruly images do not connote cultural backwardness or retarded artistic taste. Instead, the self-consciously trans-regional character of his pictures challenges prevailing paradigms of art historical inquiry and raises questions about the ambiguity of stylistic "influences," cultural transfer, and how art contributes to the character of a place. In focusing on Pordenone's religious paintings, this project aims to bring awareness to how the consequences of travel, social displacement, artistic competition, and doctrinal reform

[49] Alessandro Lamo, *Discorso di Alessandro Lamo intorno alla scoltura e pittura* (Cremona: C. Draconi, 1584), p. 32.

can help us to recognize the potential motivations behind the imitative practices of a migratory painter working in one of the most controversial periods of Italy's history.

CHAPTER 1

CONTAMINATE PAINTING IN THE FRIULI

Just below the small fortified town in the far left background of Pordenone's *Madonna della Misericordia* altarpiece, three dark streaks leave a disturbing trace upon the precipitous hillside (figures 10 and 11). Presumably trails of sewage, these sordid human traces seem an affront to the contemporary Venetian artistic ideal of the Arcadian landscape with its evocation of pastoral poetry and nostalgia for an unrecoverable world of natural innocence. Painted for the principal church of the artist's native city just after its annexation to the Venetian *terraferma*, Pordenone's *Misericordia* altarpiece abounds with surprising elements that provocatively depart from Venetian pictorial conventions.[1] Despite these eccentricities, or perhaps because of them, it is only within the last century that the altarpiece has surfaced from relative obscurity.[2] Charles Cohen, in the most extensive consideration of the painter's early career, described the altarpiece as presenting a conflict between the artist's "provincial" artistic formation and the progressive Venetian tendencies with which Pordenone could only superficially engage,

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[1] The surviving redaction of the contract for the altarpiece includes the stipulation that it be delivered by Easter 1516. While there is no evidence to confirm this, there is no reason to assume the artist did not fulfill his obligations. For the contract see Fabio Di Maniago, *Storia delle belle arti friulane*, ed. Caterina Furlan, transcribed Liliana Cargnelutti, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (Udine: Fondanzione cassa di risparmio di Udine e Pordenone: Forum, 1999), I, doc. XXXVIII, p. 233.

[2] The *pala* was unknown to Giorgio Vasari and only later recorded by Carlo Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte* (Venice, 1648), ed. Detlev Freiherrn von Hadeln, 2 vols. (Rome: Società multigrafica editrice SOMU, 1965), I, p. 117. More than three hundred years passed before, at the end of the nineteenth century, scholars first ventured a critical opinion of the altarpiece beyond the oft-quoted description of it as "*bel colorito*." Ernesto Motense incorrectly claimed that this description came from the artist's diary or notebook. Cf. Di Maniago, *Storia delle belle arti friulane*, I, pp. 44 and 207, n. 14. The altarpiece has undergone technical analysis and appeared in the 2006 exhibition *Bellini, Giorgione, Titian*. See Elisabetta Francescutti, ed., *Il restauro della Madonna della Misericordia di Giovanni Antonio de' Sacchis detto il Pordenone (circa 1483/1539)* (Pordenone: Museo Civico d'Arte, 2006); and David Alan Brown, Sylvia Ferino-Pagden, et al., eds., *Bellini, Giorgione, Titian, and the Renaissance of Venetian Painting*, Exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, 18 June - 17 September; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, 17 October 2006 - 7 January 2007 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 86-87.

resulting in a "lack of resolution."[3] It is my intention to propose an alternative account for the *Misericordia* altarpiece's alleged lack of resolution as well as for the artist's engagement with altarpiece painting more generally without falling back on what sounds like an apology for provincial taste. My concern in this chapter is to reevaluate two of the altarpieces the artist painted for the church of San Marco in the city of Pordenone, that is, the *Madonna della Misericordia* (1515-16) and *Saint Mark Enthroned with Saints and Christ Above* (ca. 1533-35) (figures 10 and 50). These paintings are emblematic of the beginning and end of Pordenone's artistic maturity and present two distinct modes of representation that I believe had been conceived in adversarial relation to the works of his Venetian peers, particularly those of Giorgione and Titian. That is, both altarpieces respond to the art of Venice by evoking and conspicuously departing from Giorgione's and Titan's poetic approaches to naturalistic representation. This oppositionality amounts to more than competitive self-positioning. While both altarpieces afford a glance into the painter's fashioning of an artistic persona, the means by which they destabilize emerging conventions of composition and decorum can also be read as an attempt to engage the para-liturgical devotions of the laity within a rapidly changing religious climate.[4] This chapter will explore how the artist's disruption of the emergent aesthetic norms of Venetian painting also point to their incongruity with some of the traditional functions

[3] Charles Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, pp. 101-102. Cohen claims that the term "provincialism" should not always be understood in terms of "a watered down, reductive exaggerated or misunderstood version of a more sophisticated style" or that it is "characterized by repetition, belated acceptance and prolonged holding on to elements from a dominant art." However, he does not provide an alternative definition and his usage of the term often compromises this disclaimer. For the quotation see Ibid., I, pp. 4-5.

[4] In some ways the lack of resolution that subtends Pordenone's altarpieces resonates with Alexander Nagel's proposal that the "unresolved impulses" and varied "forces of contention" at work in the Italian art of the first half of the sixteenth century was symptomatic of a state of religious controversy and intimately connected to questions about the creation and function of Christian images before institutionalized reform. However, I do not believe that experimentation in the sphere of Italian Renaissance religious art was always, necessarily, or wholly dependent on a context of religious crisis. Idem, *The Controversy of Renaissance Art*, p. 2ff.

and characteristics of Christian altar paintings. By focusing on the idiosyncrasies of the artist's changing approach to the altarpiece within a geographically remote and politically contested area of northwest Friuli, I will demonstrate how Pordenone, at both the start and end of his itinerant career, critically distanced himself from "modern" aesthetic and representational formulae associated with Venice, with consequences which have bearing on the cultural and religious identity of his patrons as well as for his own artistic persona. Far from signaling cultural backwardness or a lack of artistic sophistication, such experimentation resonates with a politicized sense of the local and a concern with the efficacy of religious art.

Terra(in)ferma

With the formation of the League of Cambrai in 1508, the city of Pordenone (figure 18) entered a period of increased adversity, alternating allegiance between the Venetian and Imperial camps four times before surrendering to the *Serenissima*.[5] Pordenone, along with the surrounding hamlets of Cordenons, San Quirino, Rorai Grande and Villanova, had been a Hapsburg possession since 1276. Until the sixteenth century it remained a place apart from the rest of Friuli, maintaining many of the political and

[5] For the history of the town of Pordenone in the sixteenth century see Giuseppe Valentinelli, ed., *Diplomatarium Portusnaonense* (orig. publ. Vienna: K.K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1865; reprint, Pordenone: Concordia Sette, 1984); Luigi da Porto, *Lettere storiche scritte dall'anno MDIX al MDXII da Luigi da Porto vicentino primo autore della celebre novella Giulietta e Romeo* (Venezia: Alvisopoli, 1832); Andrea Benedetti, *Storia di Pordenone*, ed. Daniele Antonini (Pordenone: Edizioni de Il Noncello, 1964; reprint 1967); Gian Carlo Menis, *History of the Friuli: the Formation of a People*, trans. Marisa A. Caruso (Pordenone/Fiume Veneto: Grafiche Editoriale Artistiche Pordenonesi Spa, 1988); Josef Riedmann, "La specificità pordenonese: i rapporti con gli Asburgo e l'Austria," in *Il Quattrocento nel Friuli Occidentale, Atti del convegno organizzato dalla Provincia di Pordenone nel mese di dicembre 1993*, 2 vols. (Provincia di Pordenone: Edizioni Biblioteca dell'Immagine, 1996), I, pp. 69-79. Marino Sanuto also records fragmentary details on the control of Pordenone in June 1510 and Bartolomeo d'Alviano's life in Idem, *I diarii di Marino Sanuto,* 58 vols. (orig. publ.Venice: F. Visentini, 1879-1903; reprint, Bologna: Forni Editore, 1969-1979), V, col. 585; X, col. 544-545, 582-583, 650-651. Also crucial for understanding pre-modern Friulian culture is Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: the Cosmos of a Sixteenth-century Miller*, trans. John and Anne Tedeschi (1st publ. Giulio Einaudi 1976; English publ. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980; New York: Penguin Books, 1982).

commercial privileges it first accrued under the reign of Duke Albert I in 1291. It was only in April 1508, after the *condottiere* Bartolomeo d'Alviano (figure 19) defeated the Imperial troops at Cadore, that the Venetian militia occupied the city of Pordenone. Two months later a deliberation of the Venetian Senate conferred jurisdiction over the city to Bartolomeo, rewarding him, as the proem to the investiture records, for his "*singular virtù, et prestanti operationi.*"[6] The *condottiere* enjoyed his reward for little more than a year before the French captured him at the Battle of Agnadello and imprisoned him until March 1513. During his imprisonment the city was repeatedly captured by Imperial forces until February 1514 when the exonerated Bartolomeo led an army to reclaim Pordenone in a siege his adversaries characterized as the aggression of an irreverent oppressor.[7] The diary of the local nobleman and Hapsburg sympathizer, Sebastiano Mantica, records how Bartolomeo personally contributed to the plundering of religious institutions, even daring to enter the church of San Marco atop his horse:

> "Observe how the enemies sack the churches: at San Marco they robbed forty chalices and at Santa Maria one remained, at San Francesco two were left: they stole plenty of vestments and crosses: the reliquaries and the great cross were saved: in the church of San Marco and of San Francesco more than eight men were murdered upon the altars. The lord Bartolomeo, captain of the Venetians,

[6] For the investiture, which included hereditary rights to the city see Antonio Battistella, "Pordenone e i d'Alviano," *Memorie Storiche Forogiuliesi*, IX (1913), pp. 244-45; Benedetti, *Storia di Pordenone*, pp. 148-149, 163-164, 263 (Apendix XXI); Federico Seneca, "L'Età veneta (fino a tutto il Cinquecento)," in *La Chiesa concordiese, 389-1989*, ed. Pietro Nonis ... [et al.], 2 vols., (Fiume Veneto, PN: Grafiche editoriali artistiche pordenonesi, 1989), II, pp. 85-99 (pp. 97-98). For a brief biography of Bartolomeo d'Alviano see Claudio Rendina, *I capitani di ventura* (Rome: Newton Compton editori, 1985), pp. 243-248. When Bartolomeo died at Gheddi during a siege of Brescia on 7 October 1515, the fief passed to his son, Livio Liviano. Livio was little more than three months old, so Bartolomeo's wife Pantasilea acted as regent until Livio reached 15 years of age. The Pordenonese *signoria* of the Alviano family ended abruptly in November 1537 when Livio, who had yet to bear an heir, died fighting near Cherasco in Piemonte while in the payroll of the French.

[7] The last imperial invasion transpired on 14 February 1514 with the support of the Pordenonese nobles Gasparo Ricchieri, Francesco Mantica, and Giorgio Biscotti.

came into the church on horseback with many others: they took the cup of the Body of Christ (!): he violated many craftsmen's wives: citizens bearing no hatred: more than a hundred women were rescued by one messer Paulino Bragasio Patavino in the house of messer Alexandro Mantega."[8]

Despite the obvious bias of Mantica's account, the profanation of the city's holy places could not but have contributed to an atmosphere of spiritual pollution. It is not surprising then that a few months later a local weaver, maestro Giovanni Francesco di Tiezzo, known as Cargnelutto, expressed his desire to have an altarpiece made for the church of San Marco with three protector saints, that is, "a Divine Mary in the form of the Mother of Mercy with her faithful at her sides, that is with Saint Joseph from one side, and from the other with an image of Saint Christopher" (figure 10).[9] Commissioned from Pordenone on 8 May 1515 and presumably completed before the Easter celebration of 1516, the Mother of Mercy or *Misericordia* altarpiece was installed upon the homonymous altar endowed in 1505 by Cargnelutto's brother, Meneghino, and located

[8] "*Nota che li nemici sachizarono le giesie: a Santo Marcho tolseno calissi 40 et a S. Maria ne restò uno, a santo Francesco restò doi: tolseno assai paramenti et crose: le reliquie et la crosa granda fo salvada: in giesie de Santo Marcho et de santo Francescho forono amazadi più de homeni 8 suxo li altari. Lo signor Bartolomeo Capitanio de Venetiani entrò a cavallo in giesia con molti altri: fo tolta la copa del Corpo de Xpo: fo violade assai artesane; zitadine non havetano male: forono salvade per uno mis(ier) Paulino Bragasio Patavino in casa di mis(ier) Alexandro Mantega più de 100 donne,*" from Sebastiano Mantica, *Diario di Pordenone, febbrario MDXIV,* ed. Giuseppe Valentinelli (Venezia: Tipografia del Commercio, 1862); reproduced in Benedetti, *Storia di Pordenone*, p. 185. The larceny recorded in Sebastiano's account is substantiated by a letter written from Padua on 20 April 1514 by Costantino da Prata, who was entrusted with the recovery of the city's religious patrimony. The document describes how Costantino petitioned Bartolomeo to restore the stolen vessels, which had been entrusted to the Father Guardian of the Santo, and how Costantino accepted a donation of ten ducats and retrieved numerous chalices, vestments, and altar furnishings of crimson velvet. See Paolo Goi, "Archivi vari," in *San Marco di Pordenone*, ed. Paolo Goi, 3 vols. (Fiume Veneto, Pordenone: GEAP, 1993), II, pp. 949-965 (p.951).

[9] "*unam Divinam Mariam in formam Matris Misericordiae cum devotis suis a latesibus, videlicet cum uno S.to Josepho ab uno latere, ab altero cum una ymagine S. Christophori,*" from the testament of Cargnelutto, 15 December 1514, partially reproduced by Elisabetta Francescutti, "La Storia," in *Il restauro della Madonna della Misericordia di Giovanni Antonio de' Sacchis detto il Pordenone (circa 1483/1539)*, ed. Elisabetta Francescutti (Pordenone: Museo Civico d'Arte, 2006), p. 7-12 (p. 7).

against the column on the left side when entering the church.[10] This location would have made Pordenone's altarpiece one of the first objects to confront visitors upon arriving in the nave. As such, the three protector saints of the altarpiece can be said to have extended the hope of celestial aid beyond Cargnelutto's family members (who appear huddled under the Virgin's mantle) to the community of the faithful (figure 16).[11] Local belief in the power of such images is testified by an inscription believed to have once

[10] Fabio Di Maniago records that the original contract (now lost) stipulated that the *pala* was to be placed upon the altar located "*introeundo, Ecclesiam, ad columnam sinistram*" (on the left column entering the church), see Di Maniago, *Storia delle belle arti friulane*, I, doc. XXXVIII, p. 233. Kurt Schwarzweller was the first scholar of the twentieth century to note the intended location against a column. Idem, *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, Ph.D. diss., Georg-August-Universität, Göttingen, 1935, p. 32. According to Caterina Furlan, the altar was suppressed following the 1584 Apostolic visit of Cesare de Nores, bishop of Parenzo, but the altarpiece remained in its original location until 1595, when it was transferred to one of the two newly constructed chapels that had been completed that year. Idem, "'Iuxta modellum': forme e figure del sacro nella pittura del Cinquecento in Friuli," in *Dal Pordenone a Palma il Giovane: devozione e pietà nel disegno veneziano del cinquecento*, ed. Caterina Furlan (Milan: Electa, 2000), pp. 25-40, (p. 27); Idem, ""Per dar maggiore vaghezza et splendore alla chiesa." La decoratione pittorica dalla metà del Quattrocento alla fine del Cinquecento," in *San Marco di Pordenone,* I, pp. 227-273, esp. pp. 245-247. The original size and location of the column is difficult to verify, given that the church underwent a series of renovations in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. For the alterations see Umberto Trame, "La fabbrica del duomo," in *San Marco di Pordenone*, I, pp. 97-179, esp. pp.111-159; and *Friuli Venezia Giulia*, Guida d'Italia del T.C.I. (Milan, Touring Club italiano, 1982), p. 466. The *jus patronatus* to the altar and altarpiece passed to the Mantica family in 1517 with the extinction of Cargnelutto's family. See Pier Carlo Begotti, "Il clero: congregazione dei sacerdoti, vicari, altaristi," in *San Marco di Pordenone*, II, pp. 605-645, esp. p. 640. The painting is now located in the first chapel on the right where it adorns the *Altare di San Giuseppe o della Misericordia* (1771) by Giovanni Battista Bettini da Portogruaro (figures 20 and 21). There seems to have been an attempt in the eighteenth century to narrativize the ensemble for the *paliotto* contains the scene of the *Dream of Saint Joseph*, which may act as a means of explaining why the Holy Family in the altarpiece is positioned in front of a landscape. The painting has left its altar for seven exhibitions (most recently in 2006, see note 2 above) and for a two-year period in the 1960s when it was stolen. For the theft see Furlan, "Per dar maggiore vaghezza et splendore alla chiesa" p. 271, nt. 67.

[11] On the roles of these saints as protectors of the faithful see Marta Paraventi, "San Cristoforo, protettore dei viandanti e dei viaggiatori. L'iconografia in Europa, in Italia e nelle Marche," in *Homo Viator: nella fede, nella cultura, nella storia*, ed. Bonita Cleri (Urbino: Quattro Venti; Ancona: Consiglio Regionale delle Marche, 1997), pp. 111-125; Carolyn C. Wilson, *St. Joseph in Italian Renaissance Society* (Philadelphia: St Joseph University Press, 2001), pp. 12-20; and William Robert Levin, *Studies in the Imagery of Mercy in Late Medieval Italian Art*, Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1983, I, pp. 435-545. Caterina Furlan has suggested that the figures kneeling under the Virgin's mantle should be identified as the patron, Cargnelutto, alongside his deceased son, wife Lucia, and nieces Maria and Aloisa, whom he had designated as his heirs. Idem, "Per dar maggiore vaghezza et splendore alla chiesa," p. 247. According to Andrea Benedetti's calculations derived from a notice of 27 June 1510, the community of the faithful may have numbered little more than 1,650 when Pordenone began painting the *Misericordia* altarpiece. Within thirty-eight years, however, the population grew by roughly sixty-four percent to 2,710 (as it was recorded in the *Summario della città, castelli, ville, et anime che sono in Terra Ferma sotto l'Ill.ma signoria di Venezia*). For the growing population of Pordenone see Andrea Benedetti, "Considerazioni sulla sviluppa della popolazione di Pordenone," *Il Noncello*, n. 5 (1955), pp. 77-80.

accompanied an image of the *pietà* at a parochial church in Sacile and attributed to the locally-acclaimed *literato*, Elio Quinzio Emiliano Cimbriaco:

> "Take heed lest you should offend this image of the spotless Virgin Mother of the Lord, advocate of all; for it verily accomplishes astonishing things, as the panel affixed to the dome expounds."[12]

This admonition suggests that the image (*spectrum*) not only reflected the stupefying power of the sacred to arrest its profanation but must itself be recognized as a potential conduit of divine power.

Conspicuously located against a column near the entrance to the church, Pordenone's altarpiece would have been most clearly visible to the congregation's lay members.[13] Adorning one of the church's many subsidiary altars, the *Misericordia Madonna* advertised the altar's dedication and honored the represented saints, making available a variety of viewer responses that do not have to be understood as *either* devotionally or liturgically related. In the following sections of this chapter, I will corroborate studies that deconstruct this dichotomy with the hope of reinforcing the idea,

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[12] "*HOC MATRIS DOMINI SED INTEGELLAE / SPECTRVM VIRGINIS OMNIVM ADVOCATAE / NE LEDAS CAVE NAM FACIT STVPENDA / SICVT FIXA THOLO EXPLICAT TABELLA*." This inscription appears on the upper edge of a shell-shaped lunette that is now in the sacristy. The lower edge of the shell records name of the supposed author: "CIMBRIACVS POETA·N·D·MAR." Reproduced in Giuseppe Marchetti, "Un Vesperbild del primo Quattrocento a Sacile," *Il Noncello*, n. 10 (1958), pp. 59-63 (p. 63). Additional testimony to local belief in the power of images to protect the devout can be found in an inscription placed at the foot of an image of the Virgin with Saints Roche and Sebastian at the parochial church of Provesano: "*Queste do figure a fato far Daniele de Zuanato p(er) / un avodo p(er) la peste forono liberati da quell male / 1513 a di 15 sete(m)ber Zuan Piero de S. Vido f(ecit)*." This inscription is reproduced in Paolo Goi and Giuseppe Bergamini, "Arte religiosa in diocesi di Concordia fra Trecento e Cinquecento," in *La Chiesa concordiese, 389-1989*, II, pp. 143-224 (p. 159).

[13] Given the numerous restorations and alterations to the church of San Marco over the past centuries, it is difficult to reconstruct an inventory of the church's decorations before 1515. There were approximately 15-17 endowed altars (including the *altare maggiore*) in San Marco by the start of the sixteenth century, although I have found no trace of their decorations. The only altarpiece that I have found mentioned before Pordenone's is the *pala* for the high altar painted by Andrea Bellunello presumably around the time of its consecration in 1468. Any attempt to gauge the relative novelty of Pordenone's altarpiece within local spheres of pictorial activity must acknowledge the lack of surviving documentation. See Furlan, "Per dar maggiore vaghezza et splendore alla chiesa," p. 236; Begotti, "Il clero: congregazione dei sacerdoti, vicari, altaristi," pp. 638-641.

most cogently articulated by Beth Williamson, that altarpieces could encourage "a meditative and devotional attachment to the sacrament of the Eucharist, both within and outside the Mass, while offering cues and encouragements to different types of devotional activity."[14] Before considering such forms of attention, we must first examine how the particular form of artifice manifested in the *Misericordia* altarpiece engages both local and Venetian artistic practices.

Contaminatio

It has been convincingly argued that altarpieces that were visible to the laity could act as sensible mediums that facilitated communication between their referent and the devotee.[15] The majority of altarpieces that survive from this time attest that such communication was typically structured by pictorial conventions of sacred hierarchy, conventions that Pordenone's composition ignores to some degree by locating the Virgin off-center and below the flanking saints.[16] The inversion of sacred hierarchy in

[14] Beth Williamson, "Altarpieces, Liturgy, and Devotion," *Speculum*, v. 79, n. 2 (2004), pp. 341-406 (p.387).

[15] For the function of altarpieces in the Renaissance see Williamson, "Altarpieces, Liturgy, and Devotion," pp. 341-406; Kees van der Ploeg, "How Liturgical is a Medieval Altarpiece?" in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor Schmidt (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 103-121, esp. p. 116; Joanna Cannon, "Beyond the Limitations of Visual Typology: Reconsidering the Function and Audience of Three *Vita* Panels of Women Saints, c. 1300," in *Italian Panel Painting*, pp. 291-313, esp. p. 307; Annegret Laabs, "Das Retabel als 'Schaufenster' zum göttlichen Heil: Ein Beitrag zur Stellung des Flügelretabels im sakralen Zeremoniell des Kirchenjahres," *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft*, v. 24 (1997), pp. 71-86; Julian Gardner, "Altars, Altarpieces, and Art History: Legislation and Usage," in *Italian Altarpieces 1250-1500: Function and Design*, eds. Eve Borsook and Fiorella Superbi Gioffredi (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), pp. 5-19; Peter Humfrey, *The Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 57-85; and David Rosand, "'*Divinità di cosa dipinta'*: pictorial structure and legibility of the altarpiece," in *The Altarpiece in the Renaissance*, pp. 143-164.

[16] David Rosand has asserted that "the ecclesiastical function requires the articulation of that field [i.e. the picture plane] to focus on the central vertical." It is the vertical axis, Rosand insists, that "establishes a fundamental polarity of high and low, top and bottom" which "enables the pictorial accommodation of notions of heaven and earth." Rosand, "'*Divinità di cosa dipinta'*: pictorial structure and legibility of the altarpiece," p. 144. The altarpieces of the Vivarini, Marco Basaiti, Giovanni Martini and, in particular, Giovanni Bellini adhere to this compositional formula or set of values, although by 1509-1510, Sebastiano del Piombo's *Saint John Chrysostom* altarpiece departed from the central vertical of iconic space while maintaining a hierarchical compositional structure.

Pordenone's painting does not undermine the Virgin's authority. Rather, her unusual position can be read as an attempt by the artist to enhance the illusion of physical proximity and personal accessibility by discarding a rigidly diagrammatic spatial organization.[17] This illusion is intensified by the subtle manipulation of volumetric modeling in light and shade to confer an emphatic plasticity to the saints and the use of rustic, everyday appearances like those found in the works of Pordenone's Lombard peers, such as Girolamo Romanino and Girolamo Savoldo.[18] Unmediated by conventional organizing principles, the tactile immediacy, humble attire, and seemingly inadvertent placement of Pordenone's holy figures encourages the impression of direct access to the divine.

At the same time, the sensation of accessibility is contravened in significant ways. For one, the relief-like assembly of the figures in the foreground also evokes the additive figural arrangement characteristic of polyptychs in which individually framed figures stand abreast of each other while remaining wholly segregated.[19] The impression of parataxis is also advanced by the lack of psychological unity among the saints and the

[17] On the diagrammatic organization of space see Walter J. Ong, "From Allegory to Diagram in the Renaissance Mind: A Study in the Significance of the Allegorical Tableau," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, v. 17, n. 4 (1959), pp. 423-440. Previous altarpieces of the Madonna della Misericordia, such as Perugino's at the Pinacoteca of Bettona, Mantegna's *Madonna della Vittoria* at the Musée du Louvre, or Bartolomeo Vivarini's triptych for the church of Santa Maria Formosa in Venice, maintain the traditional hierarchy of locating the Virgin at the apex of a triangular or pyramidal composition. Even the *Vergine del Patrocinio* by Dario Cerdonis da Pordenone (figure 22), as an example of the subject by a local artist working in the Veneto, places the Virgin just above the surrounding figures. Other local examples that retain the traditional hierarchy may found in a fresco painting at the parrocchiale of Prata di Pordenone, formerly in the Oratorio dei Vanni, in the parrocchiale at Basedo, and in a relief sculpture for the main portal of the church of the Battuti at San Vito by Giovanni Antonio Pilacorte.

[18] For the rustic, unvarnished naturalism of contemporary Lombard painters see Roberto Longhi, "Dal Moroni al Ceruti," in *I pittori della realità in Lombardia*, Exh. Cat. Palazzo Reale di Milano, April –July 1953 (Milan, 1953), pp. i-xix; Andrea Bayer, "Brescia and Bergamo: Humble Reality in Sixteenth-Century Art and Portraiture," in *Painters of Reality: the legacy of Leonardo and Caravaggio in Lombardy*, Exh. Cat. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 27 May – 15 August 2004 (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 105-112; and Stephen J. Campbell, "Renaissance Naturalism and the Jewish Bible: Ferrara, Brescia, Bergamo, 1520-1540," pp. 291-327.

[19] For the resemblance of the *Misericordia* altarpiece to triptychs see Schwarzweller, *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, p. 33.

strange spatial disjuncture that occurs where the stream through which Saint Christopher wades abruptly disappears upon reaching Mary.[20] Each figure appears absorbed in his or her own activity and unaware of others: the Virgin, for example, spreads her mantle in dreamy introspection, oblivious to Joseph's presentation of the Christ child or Christopher's watery tribulations. The archaizing scale of the kneeling figures under the Virgin's mantle also mitigates the impression of direct contact by disrupting the illusion of verisimilitude. These observations suggest an overlapping of representational concerns. This overlap points toward an experiment in negotiating the conditions for making altarpieces, one that places a desire to reduce the gap between the earthly and the divine alongside the need to maintain the authenticity and perceived efficacy of inherited image-types.

Pordenone was not the first among his peers to undermine pictorial constructions of unified space, but the means by which he does so marks a departure from the conventions he cultivated in his earlier works. The *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints* (figure 23) at the parish church of Vallenoncello and the two altarpieces painted for the Collalto family at San Salvatore (now at the Galleria dell'Accademia and Santa Maria della Salute, Venice, figures 24 and 25) utilize the hierarchical compositional structures, staid figure types, architectonic backdrops, and introspective mood characteristic of the works of Pellegrino da San Daniele, Cima da Conegliano, and Giovanni Bellini. The range of pictorial reference stems, in part, from the artist's

[20] Di Maniago noted an emotional disjunction between the figures when he wrote: "*Ammira nella prima gli arditissimi scorci del Bambino e del san Cristoforo, ai quali fa contrapposto la devota sempicità dei congregati che stanno appiè della Madonna, e l'amabilità e la dolcezza…*" in *Storia delle belle arti friulane*, I, pp. 44-45.

migratory lifestyle within and beyond the diocese of Concordia (figure 26).[21] In the years prior to the *Misericordia* commission, Pordenone had traveled at least as far as Vacile in the northeast and Susegana in the southwest, and probably much farther afield to participate in a growing network that mutually entwined without coalescing the artistic cultures of western Friuli and the Veneto (figure 27).

Like many of the towns west of the Tagliamento river, the artistic life of Pordenone's native city had relied on the circulation of mostly regional artists such as Giovanni Antonio Pilacorte, Gianfrancesco da Tolmezzo, and Andrea Bellunello. Within the diocese of Concordia, this circuit of migrating artists expanded at the turn of the century to include Cima (at Portogruaro) and Pellegrino (at Spilimbergo) as well as Giovanni Martini (at Portogruaro and Spilimbergo), Francesco da Milano (at Porcia and Caneva), and many others.[22] The trajectories of these artists were not centrally-administered and, given the absence of institutions that could maintain the regular

[21] The diocese of Concordia was established between 389-400 CE through the emanation of the Patriarchy of Aquileia. By the fourteenth century, its territory extended from the Carnic Alps to the Adriatic and from the Tagliamento river to the Livenza. However, some *pieve* belonged to the diocese of Ceneda, others to the Patriarch of Aquileia, to the abbey of Sesto, the bishopric of Caorle, and from 1517 to 1770 the municipalities of Arba and Tesis belonged to the monastery of Santa Maria Maggiore of Treviso. The seat of the bishop of the diocese of Concordia was located in the *comune* of Concordia Sagittaria until 1586/7 when it was moved to Portogruaro. On 12 January 1971 the name of the diocese changed to that of Concordia-Pordenone and the church of San Marco became a *concattedrale* of the diocese. During the years in which Pordenone was painting his altarpieces at San Marco, the bishops of Concordia were Giovanni Argentino (1511-33) and Marino Grimani (1533-37). For the history of the diocese see Pier Carlo Begotti, "Istituzioni Ecclesiasitiche," in *Società e Cultura del Cinquecento nel Friuli Occidentale*, Exh. Cat., ed. Paolo Goi, Pordenone , ex Teatro sociale, 27 July 1984 – 13 Jan. 1985 (Pordenone: Edizioni della Provincia di Pordenone, 1985), pp. 147-154; and Pietro Nonis et al., eds., *La Chiesa concordiese, 389-1989*.

[22] For the presence of these painters in the diocese of Concordia see Goi and Bergamini, "Arte religiosa in diocesi di Concordia fra Trecento e Cinquecento," p. 162. Pietro di San Vito also worked in the diocese of Concordia at the parish church of Provesano and the miniaturist, Giovanni de Cramariis, worked in Spilimbergo. Outside of the diocese, other near-contemporary Friulian painters include Pietro Fuluto, Giacomo Secante, Bernardino Blaceo, Gian Paolo Thanner, Michele Parth as well as Gaspare Negro and others.

services of a master artisan, operated almost exclusively on an *ad hoc* basis.[23] The dependency of towns like the city of Pordenone on the circulation of artists moving between localities (rather than on a single or permanent family of artists or school) raises the question of how one can describe its local artistic culture. To a large degree the permeability of these places is definitive of their character. For centuries the city of Pordenone had functioned as a significant river port along one of the most important trade routes that extended from Venice to Vienna. Even the city's heraldic device, which depicts a set of golden doors that open over rippling waves and the Hapsburgian field of red with argent fess, are suggestive of its identification as a kind of way station for merchants and artisans navigating the borderlands between the Carnic Alps and the Friulian plains (figures 28, 29, 30).[24] After Venetian political subjugation, the city's cultural landscape continued to be shaped by its participation in transalpine commerce that mitigated dependency on a local market.[25] These conditions enabled opportunities for local self-determination and, in the artistic sphere, the possibility of resisting dependency on the *città dominante* of Venice. In what follows, it will become clear that the unusual compositional choices exhibited in the *Misericordia* altarpiece do not simply reflect a trans-regional network of artistic exchange but are also part of a critical

[23] It would be erroneous to assume that migration was driven exclusively by economic necessity. Despite the fame he later achieved in Venice, Pordenone never resided in a single place for more than four years.

[24] In 1401 William, Duke of Carinthia and Carniola, granted the citizens of Pordenone the use of the Hapsburg colors for the city's coat of arms. A document dated 16 February 1401 at San Vito di Carinzia records the formal concession of the *stemma* to the community. See Carlo Morossi, "Lo stemma della città di Pordenone," *Il Noncello*, n. 3 (1954), pp. 7-30 (esp. pp. 12-14).

[25] Of course, much more than material merchandise traveled along the trade route to Vienna. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, local literary circles participated in an exchange with the University of Vienna that began with the 1488 arrival of Bernhard Perger, superintendent of the University and Imperial commissioner, and continued in 1493 when the Pordenonese humanist Cornelio Paolo Amalteo traveled to Vienna to conduct a series of lectures at the University on poetry and rhetoric. Andrea Benedetti, "La cultura umanistica in Pordenone e l'accademia liviana," *Il Noncello*, n. 1 (1952), pp. 3-50 (p. 14, nt. 40 and p. 15); Pauline Grant Waite Skarshaug, "Bernhard Perger von Stanz," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, v. 37 (1943), pp. 69-74.

resistance to what was coming to define the recognizable distinctiveness of the Venetian manner.

Since the publication of Vasari's *Lives*, the products of Pordenone's early career have been characterized by their stylistic familiarity to the works of Giorgione, a specification largely responsible for the unstable attribution of numerous paintings.[26] Caterina Furlan, the foremost Italian scholar of Pordenone, has repeatedly advocated a view of the *Misericordia* altarpiece as an example of "*un liricismo idillico giorgionesco*."[27] This characterization raises the problem of nomenclature, for the question of what exactly is signified by "*giorgionesco*" (or "*giorgionismo*" as it appears elsewhere) has become a rather repetitive academic industry.[28] Leaving aside the

[26] Vasari, *Le vite* (1968), ed. G. Milanesi, V, p. 111. Beginning with Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, modern scholarship has considered the *Misericordia* altarpiece almost entirely in terms of its relation to the works of Giorgione and Titian. Idem, *A History of Painting in North Italy: Venice, Padua, Vicenza, Verona, Ferrara, Milan, Friuli, Brescia from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century*, trans. Tancred Borenius, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (London: John Murray, 1912), III, pp. 143-144. For the problems of attribution see Caterina Furlan, "Tra Giorgione e il Pordenone: a proposito di alcuni dipinti già nella collezione del duca d'Orléans," in *Giornata di studio per il Pordenone, Piacenza, S. Maria di Campagna, 26 settembre 1981*, ed. Paola Ceschi Lavagetto (Parma: Artegrafica Silva, 1981), pp. 12-23; and Ugo Soragni, "Un "inedito" Giorgionesco. La famiglia del satiro di Giovanni Antonio de' Sacchis (il Pordenone)," in *Giorgione e il culto del sole: erasie e significati nella pittura del Rinascimento* (Saonara (Pd): Il Prato, 2009), pp. 195-221.

[27] The quote is from Caterina Furlan, *Il Pordenone* (Milan: Electa, 1988), p. 19. Cohen was the first scholar to characterize Pordenone's interaction with the art of Giorgione as the superficial and incomplete understanding of a more sophisticated artist's mode of expression. Following Cohen's publication, Furlan appears to have amended her earlier observations with greater specification when she admits a "*motivo di tensione*" in the *Misericordia* altarpiece that confirms "*l'accezione del tutto particolare con cui l'artista declina il giorgionismo*." See Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, pp. 88-90; and Caterina Furlan, "Il Pordeone e Giovanni da Udine: artisti friulani e «universali»", in *Arte in Friuli dal Quattrocento al Settecento*, ed. Paolo Pastres (Udine: Società filologica friulana, 2008), pp. 171-187 (p. 174).

[28] Significant evaluations of this question include, but are far from limited to: Bernard Aikema, "Re-constructing Giorgione," in *Reflections on Renaissance Venice. A Celebration of Patricia Fortini Brown*, eds. Blake de Maria and Mary E. Frank (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2013), pp. 105-111; Mauro Lucco, *Giorgione* (Milan: Electa, 2010), pp. 1-30; Charles Hope, "Giorgione's *Fortuna critica*," in *Giorgione: Myth and Enigma*, ed. Sylvia Ferino Pagden and Giovanna Nepi Scirè, Exh. Cat. Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, 2 March – 11 July 2004 (Milan: Skira, 2004), pp. 41-55; Idem, "Giorgione or Titian? History of a Controversy," in *The Council of the Frick Collection Lecture Series* (New York: Frick Collection, 2003), pp. 7-47; Terisio Pignatti and Filippo Pedrocco, *Giorgione* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1999), pp. 92-212; Jaynie Anderson, *Giorgione: Painter of Poetic Brevity* (Paris and New York: Flammarion, 1997), pp. 298-346; Paul Holberton, "Varieties of *giorgionismo*," in *New Interpretations in Venetian Renaissance Painting*, ed. Francis Ames-Lewis (Birkbeck College, University of London, Department of History of Art,

possibility that how we define Giorgione's artistic identity is reliant on Titian's response to it, Giorgione has been considered determinative of a specifically Venetian mode of representation, an approach that revolutionized painting in and around the *laguna* and which Pordenone's *Misericordia* altarpiece has been said to imitate ineptly.[29] This form of painting has been associated with an emerging "poetical" genre characterized by abbreviation and abstraction, a designation sometimes made on the basis of a passage from Paolo Pino's 1548 *Dialogo di pittura,* in which painting is equated with poetry by analogy to the rhetorical principle of invention and painters are advised to practice a kind of brevity – in terms of invention and technique – in a manner comparable to that found in the comedies and other compositions of the poets.[30] In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, scholars who sought to identify poetic effects in Giorgione's works were largely drawn to paintings like the Louvre *Concert champêtre* (now attributed to Titian), leading them to associate Giorgione's approach to painting with pastoral literature (such

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1994), pp. 31-41; Francis Haskell, "La sfortuna critica di Giorigone," in *Giorgione e l'umanismo veneziano*, ed. Rodolfo Pallucchini, 2 vols. (Florence, 1981), II, pp. 583-606; Andreina Griseri, "Arcadia: crisi e trasformazione fra Sei e Settecento," in *Storia dell'arte,* ed. Federico Zeri, 12 vols. (Turin: Einaudi, 1981), Pt. 2, II, pp. 525-595 (pp. 543-547); Rudolf Wittkower, "L'Arcadia e il Giorgionismo," in *Umanesimo Europeo e Umanesimo Veneziano*, ed. Vittore Branca (Florence: Sanson, 1964), pp. 473-484; and Leonello Venturi, *Giorgione e il giorgionismo* (Milan: Ulrico Hoepli, 1913).

[29] For the conception of Giorgione's artistic identity as a "construct" remade by subsequent artists see Maria Loh, *Titian Remade: Repetition and the Transformation of Early Modern Italian Art* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007), p. 63; and Stephen J. Campbell, "Naturalism and Venetian "*Poesia*": Grafting, Metaphor, and Embodiment in Giorgione, Titian, and the Campagnolas" in *Subject as Aporia in Early Modern Art,* ed. Alexander Nagel and Lorenzo Pericolo (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp.115-142 (p. 126).

[30] "*...la pittura è propria poesia, cioè invenzione, la qual fa apparere quello che non è, però util sarebbe osservare alcuni ordini eletti dagli poeti che scrivono, i quale nelle loro comedie et altre composizioni vi introducono la brevità*" in Paolo Pino, *Dialogo di pittura* (first publ. Venice, 1548), in *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento: fra manierismo e controriforma*, ed. Paola Barocchi, 3 vols. (Bari: G. Laterza, 1960-1962), I, pp. 93-139 (p. 115). For the association of Giorgione's works with a poetical genre of painting see Stephen J. Campbell, "Giorgione's *Tempest*, *Studiolo* Culture, and the Renaissance Lucretius," *Renaissance Quarterly*, v. 56, n. 2 (2003), pp. 299-332; Jaynie Anderson, *Giorgione: the painter of 'poetic brevity'*, pp. 44-49; Charles Hope, "Poesie and Painted Allegories," in *The Genius of Venice*, ed. Jane Martineau and Charles Hope (New York: H. N. Abrams, 1984), pp. 35-37; Wendy S. Sheard, "Giorgione's *Tempesta*: External vs. Internal Texts," *Italian Culture*, v. 4 (1983), pp. 145-158.

as the eclogues of Matteo Maria Boiardo or Jacopo Sannazaro's *Arcadia*) (figure 31).[31] This correspondence stems from the minimization of dramatic action, the pronounced role of landscape and lighting as actants in the determination of mood and the evocation of a *locus amoenus*, or an unrecoverable Edenic realm that also serves as the setting of amorous longing.[32] Despite the removal of the *Concert champêtre* from Giorgione's *oeuvre*, the force of this association persists and the modifier "*giorgionesco*" is still used interchangeably with "pastoral" and "Arcadian." This correlation is problematic. While Giorgione's way of painting languid bodies in shady landscapes probably aided Titian and other artists in the development of what might be called a pastoral mode, the few works currently attributed to Giorgione are so disparate in terms of subject, metaphorical

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[31] The *Concert champêtre* was first referred to as *Pastorale* by Charles Lebrun in 1683. See Francis Haskell, "Giorgione's *Concert champêtre* and its Admirers," in *Past and Present in Art and Taste* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 141-153 (p. 146). For the attribution to Titian see Alessando Ballarin's entry in *Le Siècle de Titien: l'âge d'or de la peinture à Venise*, Exh. Cat., Grand Palais, 9 March – 14 June 1993 (Paris: Réunion des Musées nationaux, 1993), pp. 343-348. A landscape by Titian was explicitly associated with Sannazaro's *Arcadia* in Lodovico Dolce's *Dialogo dei colori* (Venice, 1565; reprint Lanciano: Carabba, 1913), pp. 91-92:
"Mario: *Il satire adunque dinoterà lascivia*?
Cornelio: *Cosi è. La qual cosa ha espresso mirabilmente Tiziano in un suo paese, nel quale v'è una Ninfa che si siede, insidiata da due Satiri; nè in quel paese vi si vede altro che Satiri, mostrando di averlo fatto per il paese della lascivia, e forse imitando a un cotal modo o più tosto alludendo all pittura che descrive il Sannazaro nella sua* Arcadia."

[32] For more on pastoral painting in a Venetian context see Una Roman D'Elia, *The Poetics of Titian's Religious Paintings* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 9-26; Bruce Cole, *Titian and Venetian painting, 1450–1590* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), pp. 48-56; Enrico Guidoni, "La costruzione del paesaggio nella pittura di Giorgione," in *Ricerche su Giorgione e sulla pittura del Rinascimento* (Roma: Kappa, 1998), pp. 207-215; Paul Holberton, "The *Pastorale* or *Fête champêtre* in the Early Sixteenth Century," in *Titian 500*, *Studies in the History of Art*, v. 45, CASVA, Symposium Papers XXV, ed. Joseph Manca, National Gallery of Art, Washington (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1993), pp. 245-262; William R. Rearick, "From Arcady to the Barnyard," in *The Pastoral Landscape*, *Studies in the History of Art*, v. 36, CASVA, Symposium papers XX, ed. John Dixon Hunt, Nationally Gallery of Art, Washington (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1992), pp. 137-159; David Rosand, "Pastoral *Topoi*: On the Construction of Meaning in Landscape," in *The Pastoral Landscape*, pp. 161-177; Idem, "Giorgione, Venice, and the Pastoral Vision," in *Places of Delight: the Pastoral Landscape*, Exh. Cat. National Gallery of Art and The Phillips Collection, 6 November 1988 – 22 January 1989, eds. Robert C. Cafritz, Lawrence Gowing, David Rosand (Washington, DC: Philipps Collection; New York: C. N. Potter, 1988), pp. 59-67; Luba Freedman, *The Classical Pastoral in the Visual Arts* (New York; Bern; Frankfurt; Paris: Peter Lang, 1989); Mauro Lucco, "La giovinezza del Pordenone (nuove riflessioni su vecchi studi)," in *Giornata di studio per il Pordenone, Piacenza, S. Maria di Campagna, 26 settembre 1981,* pp. 26-42.

effects, and emotional appeal (e.g., the *Dresden Venus*, the *Tempesta*, and the *Allendale Nativity*) that they resist analogy to a single literary genre and cannot be "decoded" by taking recourse to a generic set of bucolic *topoi* (figures 32, 33, 34). Instead, the poetic artifice of Giorgione (as well as early Titian) can be more productively identified with a process of making that privileged the sensual character and metaphoric potential of the natural world over the conditions of determinate subject matter or consequential action, and irrespective of modern image categories, sacred or profane.[33] As we shall see, Pordenone's engagement with the art of Venice at this time is also informed by a poetic conception of invention, but one that deliberately flouts the lyric and sensual character of Giorgione's and Titian's elegiac images.

Past appraisals of Pordenone's *Misericordia Madonna* have claimed that the artist's manipulation of color and shadow seeks to reproduce Giorgione's "tonal fusion," wherein figures and surroundings are intermeshed and the landscape engenders an ambience that corresponds to the dream-like psychology of the figures.[34] The technique Pordenone employed in his altarpiece undoubtedly softens the transitions between figures and allowed the artist to explore the affective qualities of refined tonal gradations in a way that approximates the chromatic subtlety of the *Allendale Nativity* or *Castelfranco* altarpiece (figures 34 and 36). And an idyllic setting is at least superficially evoked by certain conventions of representation, such as the contraposition of distant cityscape with uncultivated foreground to suggest a quality of escape into nature or – more characteristic

[33] My understanding of Giorgione's and Titian's poetic approach to naturalistic representation is informed by Campbell, "Naturalism and Venetian "*Poesia*"," pp. 115-142.

[34] On tonal fusion in relation to Pordenone's altarpiece see Caterina Furlan, "Rivistando il Pordenone: congetture, ipotesi, proposte," in *Il Pordenone*, Exh. Cat. Villa Manin di Passariano e l'ex-convento di S. Francesco, Pordenone, ed. Caterina Furlan (Milan: Electa, 1984), pp. 48-88, p. 58; Idem, *Il Pordenone,* 1988, pp. 74-77; and Idem, "Per dar maggiore vaghezza et splendore alla chiesa," p. 249. For a reaction against this view see Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 88.

of Titian's paintings at this time – the *topos* of idle shepherds entertaining themselves with the music of the *tenuis avena* (figure 17).[35] However, the nostalgia for a lost realm of hospitable retreat appears controverted by Pordenone's landscape, which is not populated with the mysterious forests and lush glades of, say, Titian's London *Noli Me Tangere* or the Louvre *Concert,* but with an empty, seemingly scorched field that no amount of pigment deterioration can wholly account for (figures 10, 13, 31 and 37).[36] Likewise, the exaggerated exertion of Saint Christopher's movement and the anxiety that weighs upon his countenance has little in common with the tranquility that pervades the aforementioned *comparanda* (figure 14). Even more surprising, of course, are the unsavory trails that trickle down the hillside in alarming juxtaposition to the Christ child's head (figure 11). These scatological smears seem to deride the broken brushwork that is characteristic of Giorgione's and Titian's landscapes; a kind of painterly

[35] On the popularity of Jacopo Sannazaro's pastoral romance and a biography of the author see Michele Scherillo's introduction to Jacopo Sannazaro, *Arcadia* (Turin: Ermanno Loescher, 1888), pp. ix-cclxxvii. The *tenuis avena* or slender reed pipe would be known to anyone familiar with the first two lines of Virgil's first eclogue: "*Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi / silvestrem tenui musam meditaris avena*. (You, Tityrus, lie under the canopy of a spreading beech, wooing the woodland Muses on slender reed)," translated in H. Rushton Fairlough, *Virgil*, revised G. P. Goold, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 24-25. Servius interpreted the slender or humble reed to characterize the nature of the style Virgil employed in the bucolic. See Maurus Servius Honoratus, *Servii Grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii carmina commentarii*, ed. Giorgivs Thilo (Leipzig: B. G. Teubneri, 1887), III, fasc. I, "In Vergilii Bucolica et Georgica Commentarii," p. 5. For more on Servius' commentary and the pastoral as a "low" style see Helen Cooper, *Pastoral: Mediaeval into Renaissance* (Ipswich, UK: D. S. Brewer; Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1977), pp. 127-143. For the *tenuis avena* see Peter L. Smith, "Vergil's "Avena" and the Pipes of Pastoral Poetry," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, v. 101 (1970), pp. 497-510. For the use of buildings to offset the natural locale of the figures see Rosand, "Pastoral *Topoi*: On the Construction of Meaning in Landscape," p. 163. Cohen has noted that Pordenone's Saint Joseph mimics certain physiognomies found in Giorgione's works such as his counterpart in the *Allendale Nativity*, but that the strange, even impish, facial expression of Pordenone's Joseph is altogether foreign to Giorgione (figures 15 and 35). Idem, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 89.

[36] The loss of color that the panel has suffered and the tendency of green pigments to turn brown over time must be taken into consideration for an interpretation of the field as scorched. However, Pordenone's inclusion of vulgar details from everyday life is far removed from what modern scholars consider to be the distinguishing features of pastoral painting. For the condition of the panel and the identification of buildings in the background see Francescutti, "La Storia," p. 12; and Valentina Scuccato and Cristina Mion, "Il Restauro," in *Il restauro della Madonna della Misericordia*, pp. 15-23. For the origins of the city's coat of arms see Morossi, "Lo stemma della città di Pordenone," pp. 7-30.

perversion of the *pittura di macchia* made just under the city's Hapsburgian coat of arms (figure 12). Rather than as parody, this implicit defiance of a Venetian landscape aesthetic – whether we call it pastoral or otherwise – needs to be seen as a countering gesture or a declaration of oppositional aesthetics.

It must also be noted that the temporal and geographical coordinates of this declaration give credence to the idea that the emergence of *colorito* – as a process that involved interpenetrating layers of color and shadow, broken brushstrokes, and impasted pigment – was not exclusively a Venetian phenomenon. Indeed, it was at precisely the same time that Pordenone was working on the *Misericordia Madonna* that Dosso Dossi in Ferrara and Girolamo Romanino in Brescia were experimenting with softened contours and dramatic chiaroscuro effects as well as with brushstrokes that were neither smooth nor graded.[37] Like his Lombard and Emilian peers, Pordenone developed his own approach to painting that, in the case of the *Misericordia Madonna*, emerged in dialectical interaction with Venetian artistic practices.

That such careful mediation governed the *pala's* conception is encouraged by radiographic evidence that reveals the altarpiece underwent at least two stages of design, including the removal of a donkey from the right foreground and adjustments to Saint Christopher's pose (figure 38).[38] As the product of a gradual accretion of ideas that

[37] Consider the broken brushstrokes and impasted color in the landscape of Dosso Dossi's and Garofalo's *Costabili Polyptych* (1513-1514) at the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Ferrara, or the drapery, hair, and clouds of Romanino's *Saints John the Baptist and Augustine* (1511-1512) from the polyptych that once stood on the high altar of the church of the Corpo di Christo in Brescia (now private collection). For the idea of Dosso Dossi as a pioneer of *colorito* see Giancarlo Fiorenza, *Dosso Dossi: Paintings of Myth, Magic, and the Antique* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), p. 6.

[38] Francescutti, "La Storia," p. 9. It should be noted that the painting was originally rectangular; it probably received its current shape when it was reinstalled in the first chapel on the right side of the nave. Additional evidence for an extended gestation period is suggested by the surviving redaction of the contract, which required Pordenone to submit a *modello* of the *pala* to the patron. Cohen has suggested possible studies for

evolved in stages over time, I believe the *Misericordia* altarpiece presents its own counter-aesthetic that deliberately opposes his Venetian peers' sensual and sanitized handling of nature by confronting it with the unvarnished banalities of the rural world. This is to say that the *Misericordia* altarpiece reflects an alternative form of poetic artifice, one that departs from Giorgione's and Titian's means of animating the metaphoric and affective potential of nature by knowingly and ironically playing upon a "low" aesthetics, which, in turn, is deliberately put in confrontation with older conventions of altarpiece painting (such as the archaizing scale of the donors and the paratactic placement of the saints). This alternative mode of representation is not the organic product of a native plurilingualism. Instead, the critical interferences of Pordenone's mode of representation suggest a practice of contaminative imitation or *contaminatio,* for which compelling insight may be found in early sixteenth-century experiments in Latin lyric and vernacular theater.[39]

As the writings of Jacopo Sannazaro and Giovanni Pontano attest, pastoral literature (in prose and verse) became increasingly flexible at the end of the fifteenth century and was used to express a range of moods in its idealized escapism.[40] However,

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the landscape background. See Di Maniago, *Storia delle belle arti friulane*, 3rd ed., I, Doc. XXXVIII, p. 233; and Cohen, *The Drawings of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, pp. 96-97.

[39] My understanding of *contaminatio* as a mode of literary imitation derives from Greene, *The Light in Troy*, pp. 156-162, 168-69; Denis Looney, *Compromising the Classics: Romance Epic Narrative in the Italian Renaissance*, p. 21, 30, 163-164; Louise G. Clubb, *Italian Drama in Shakespeare's Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 6-7, 23-33; and George E. Duckworth, *The Nature of Roman Comedy: a Study in Popular Entertainment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), pp. 202-208 ("The Problem of *Contaminatio*"). Also helpful for understanding practices of appropriation and reformulation in early modern Italian literature are Peter Martinelli, "Narrative poetry," in *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature*, eds. Peter Brand and Lino Pertile (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 233-250; and Brian Richardson, "Prose" in *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature*, pp. 181-232.

[40] For the flexibility of the pastoral mode in the later fifteenth century see Enrico Carrara, *La poesia pastorale* (Milan: F. Vallardi, 1909); William Kennedy, *Jacopo Sannazaro and the Uses of Pastoral* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1983); Thomas K. Hubbard, *The Pipes of Pan: Intertextuality and Literary Filiation in the Pastoral Tradition from Theocritus to Milton* (Ann Arbor:

the insinuation of a polluted pastoral realm is most explicitly showcased by the rustic realism of the Carmelite friar Baptista Spagnuoli Mantuanus' *Adulescentia* (1498). Mantuanus' series of ten eclogues present a striking alternative to the works of his peers in that it weds austere Christian morality to trenchant wit and rank coarseness.[41] Mantuanus' willingness to transgress the decorum of Latin lyric is perhaps nowhere clearer than in his eighth eclogue on the piety of country folk, *De rusticorum religione*. Here the shepherd Candidus sings the praises of the mountain race as a rebuttal to the aspersions cast by his companion, Alphus:

> "The season counsels us to drive our herds as usual to the mountains where the dew is on the grass and the summer is more gentle […] In the high mountains I have beheld founts and pastureland, I have seen meat pies and thick polenta consumed. People are hardy there. Strong young men with big feet, shoulders toughened by toil, and sinewy arms, a shaggy, rugged band unwearied from carrying heavy loads […] If you want to castrate bulls or split beech trees, if you want dung carried from your stables or wish to clean sewers or toilets or open gutters clogged with refuse or descend a deep well on a ladder, these men have both seasoned skills and hardy vigor. Why say more? […] For serving food in taverns, building fires, turning spits with a skilled hand and cleaning chimneys,

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University of Michigan Press, 1998), pp. 247-268; Cooper, *Pastoral: Mediaeval into Renaissance*, pp. 100-110; and Matteo Soranzo, *Poetry and Identity in Quattrocento Naples* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014).

[41] The *Adulescentia* has been variously described as the delightfully incongruous mingling of pastoral and Hesiodic themes, the perpetuation of *Trecento* moral didacticism, and the most explicitly satiric and overt among contemporary pastoral efforts in its social criticism. For further discussion of the *Adulescentia* see Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, *The Green Cabinet: Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 25; Cooper, *Pastoral: Mediaeval into Renaissance*, pp. 100-101, 108-110; and Hubbard, *The Pipes of Pan*, pp. 264-269.

for lugging cattle guts to the river and sweeping up unsightly dirt with a broom they are a most able race."[42]

The shepherd's boorish commendation is worlds away from the burning sighs of Sannazaro's lovelorn swains. While the mock-eulogy of Candidus' speech is clearly comic and satirical, the unvarnished details that the shepherd recounts expose a mundane world of daily hardships, a world conceived in very different terms from Arcadia's moonlit paths and meadows "enameled with a thousand colors."[43] In the ninth eclogue, the critical edge of Mantuanus' earthy wit becomes politically loaded as Candidus laments the hope he placed in the false testimony of Corydon, who enticed the shepherd to lead his flocks to "the listless fields, lifeless stones and dried up springs" of the Latin groves.[44] The lament is followed by a poorly concealed invective against the papal court, as Faustulus explains to Candidus:

> "Rome is among men what the owl is among birds. She sits on a tree trunk and, as if she were the queen of birds, summons the multitude from afar with her haughty commands, ignorant of her large eye and ears, foul head, and the hooked point of her menacing beak. And while their nimble lightness bears them here and there on to the tree's twig growth, a string ensnares the feet of some, twigs smeared with birdlime hold fast others, and all become spoils to be roasted on willow spits."[45]

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[42] Baptista Spagnuoli Mantuanus, *Adulescentia: the eclogues of Mantuan*, ed. and trans. Lee Piepho (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1989), eclogue VIII, pp. 69-71. For a general discussion of the use of satire in Renaissance pastoral poetry see S. K. Heninger, "The Renaissance Perversion of Pastoral," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, v. 22, n. 2 (1961), pp. 254-261.

[43] Jacopo Sannazaro, *Arcadia and Piscatorial Eclogues*, trans. Ralph Nash (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1966), eclogue VIII, lines 142-143, p. 89.

[44] Mantuanus, *Adulescentia*, eclogue IX, p. 79.

[45] Ibid., eclogue IX, p. 84-85. The owl allegory suggests Mantuanus' familiarity with Poliziano's *Lamia*, which closes with a fable of the wise owl (*noctua*) and birdlime, or perhaps Poliziano's source, the *Discourses* of Dio Chrysostom. See Christopher S. Celenza, ed. *Angelo Poliziano's* Lamia*: Text, Translation, and Introductory Studies* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), pp. 250-253; and the essay therein

These passages present an alternative to the romanticizing exoticism developed by Mantuanus' peers in Naples and Venice. On the one hand, the *Adulescentia* perpetuates a traditional bucolic pattern of counterpoising an imagined or half-remembered dream of ineffable bliss to the travails of a more consequential existence. It also continues the Virgilian custom of employing the pastoral mode as a vehicle for social commentary, and the venom of Mantuanus' rancor in the above excerpt reveals the gravity with which the mode could be treated.[46] On the other hand, Mantuanus blends the *stylus humilis* of the Latin idyll with disgusting details ("cattle guts" and "gutters clogged with refuse") that undermine the laments of unrequited desire with crude and pointed sarcasm that is aimed not only at institutional corruption (especially that of the papal court) but also at the decorum that governs the humble language of pastoral itself.[47] The provocative mingling of gross realism with idyllic naïveté that characterizes Mantuanus' attempt to disconcert or even shock his readers is an important indication of how authors could manipulate humor toward a strikingly contentious effect. In some sense, the "contaminated" language of the *Adulescentia* helped enable the conditions necessary for recognizing the polemical undercurrent that could accompany pastoral works.

In early modern vernacular literature the verb *contaminare* generally meant "to corrupt" and "to pollute,"[48] but there is disagreement as to whether the practice of literary

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by Denis J.-J. Robichaud, "Angelo Poliziano's *Lamia*: Neoplatonic Commentaries and the Plotinian Dichotomy between the Philologist and the Philosopher," pp. 131-189.

[46] Francesco Petrarch's criticism of the papal court at Avignon in the sixth and seventh eclogues of the *Bucolicum carmen* stands out as the most obvious source of inspiration for Mantuanus. Idem, *Bucolicum Carmen*, trans. Thomas G. Bergin (New York: Yale University Press, 1974).

[47] Thomas Hubbard has argued that Mantuanus drew specifically on the *Satires* of Juvenal (6 and 7) and Horace (II. 6), revitalizing such themes as the vices of women, careless patrons, and the comedic potential of contrasting the attitudes/mores of city and country folk. Idem, *The Pipes of Pan,* p. 264. For a discussion of pastoral decorum see Cooper, *Pastoral: Mediaeval into Renaissance,* pp. 127-143.

[48] In the third book of Pietro Bembo's *Gli Asolani*, for example, *contaminare* is used to denote the polluting of old age with inappropriate desires: *"A'quali se la vecchiezza non toglie questi disii, quale più misera*

contaminatio necessarily bore derogatory connotations.[49] Much more than the syntactical and lexical muddling of languages, *contaminatio* designated a form of imitation that deliberately blended models, themes, dialects, or formal characteristics for expressive effect.[50] It is in the latter sense that I employ the term, but without excluding the suggestion of deliberate defilement. Among the *loci classici* for this kind of practice are the plays of Terence and Plautus. In the prologue to Terence's comedy, *The Self-Tormentor*, the actor Lucius Ambivius Turpio defends contamination, proclaiming:

> "Malicious people have spread rumors to the effect that the playwright has contaminated (*contaminasse*) many Greek plays while creating few Latin ones. He does not deny that this is so; he does not regret it and he declares that he will do the same again. He has good writers as a precedent, and he reckons that with them as a precedent he is permitted to do what they did."[51]

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disconvenevolezza può essere, che la vecchia età di fanciulle voglie contaminare, e nelle membra tremanti e deboli affettare i giovanili pensieri?" (If senility does not rob them [lovers] of these desires, what can be of more wretched impropriety than to taint old age with childish wishes, and to lay hold of weak and trembling limbs with juvenile thoughts?) Pietro Bembo, *Gli Asolani di Cardinale M. Pietro Bembo* (Milan: Società Tipografica de' Classici Italiani, 1808), p. 276.

[49] Cf. Syvia Rizzo, *Il lessico filologico degli umanisti* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1973), p. 286, who includes *contamino* within the semantic domain of *corrompere*, citing Poliziano for an example of its philological use. See Angelus Poliziano, *Miscellaneorum centuria prima* (Florence: Antonius Miscominus, 1489), ch 89, niiii, accessed from https://archive.org/stream/ita-bnc-in1-00000651-001#page/n166/mode/2up. See also Duckworth, *The Nature of Roman Comedy*, pp. 202-208 ("The Problem of *Contaminatio*"); and Lonney's discussion of Boiardo's and Ariosto's use of contamination as "programs of imitative *poiesis*" in *Compromising the Classics*, esp. chapters 2 and 3 (p. 163 for the quote).

[50] For this view of contamination and its topicality in early modern Italy see Greene, *The Light in Troy*, pp. 156-62, 168-69. As we shall see, what distinguishes Pordenone's contaminate artifice from simple eclecticism (in the sense of borrowing at random from diverse sources) is the adversarial character and geographical awareness of its performance. For the varied theories and disputes of eclectic imitative practices in early modern Italy see Martin L. McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation in the Italian Renaissance: the Theory and Practice of Literary Imitation in Italy from Dante to Bembo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

[51] John Barsby, trans. and ed., *Terence*, The Loeb Classical Library, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), I, p. 180-183, lines 16-21: "*nam quod rumores distulerunt malevoli / multas contaminasse Graecas, dum facit / paucas Latinas, factum id esse hic non negat / neque se pigere et deinde facturum autumat. / habet bonorum exemplum, quo exemplo sibi / licere facere quod illi fecerunt putat*." Terence listed his precedents for this kind of combination in the prologue to *The Woman of Andros (Andria)*, ll. 18-20: Naevius, Plautus, and Ennius. See Ibid., p. 51. The study of Terence's comedies was a standard component of a humanist education in early modern Italy. As Huub van der Linden has shown, Alberti quoted Terence when he described a practice of eclectic appropriation and reassembly for

The redemption of Terence (and Plautus) in the late fifteenth century was accompanied by new comedic experiments in Italian drama.[52] In vernacular theater, the Venetian productions of Angelo Beolco, known as his character Ruzante, are particularly notable for the ways in which they exploited the potential of a contaminate linguistic posturing for comedic effect and social criticism. Beolco's earliest extant work, *La Pastoral* (ca. 1517-1521) combines the modish eclogue with the Venetian *vilanesca* and *buffonesca* farce. In doing so, it blithely derides the hierarchical values that prevailed in the literature and culture of the Venetian elite by directly juxtaposing the linguistic and social conventions of dialect-speaking Paduan peasants with the literary realm of Tuscan-speaking Arcadian shepherds. Set in the Paduan countryside, these two antithetical groups, along with a Bergamask-speaking quack doctor, are brought together through the failed love exploits of the shepherd Milesio, which functions as the pretext for a series of farcical miscommunications. For example, when the Arcadian Arpino comes upon the recumbent bodies of his friends (who he assumes are dead), he turns to the foul-mouthed peasant Ruzante for help in carrying their bodies to the temple of Pan. Ruzante, not understanding the refined literary Tuscan of the shepherd, mistakes the reference to Pan as an offer of bread (*pane*) and Arpino's castigation of his material self-interest as an invitation to pleasuring himself:

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decorating buildings in his *Profugiorum ab ærumma libri III*: "*E quince nacque come e' dicono:* 'nihil dictum quin prius dictum'. *E veggonsi queste cose litterarie usurpate da tanti, e in tanti loro scritti adoperate e disseminate, che oggi a chi voglia ragionarne resta altro nulla che solo el raccogliere e assortirle e poi accopiarle insieme con qualche varietà dagli altri e adattezza dell'opera sua* […] (And so the result was, as they say, '*nihil dictum quin prius dictum'*. Indeed, you can see how these literary things have been usurped by so many people, and applied and disseminated in so many of their writings that anyone today who wants to discuss such matters just has to collect and rearrange them, and then connect them together somewhat differently with respect to what others before have done, but with appropriateness in terms of his own work)." Huub van der Linden, "Alberti, *Quid Tum?*, and the Redemption of Terence in Early Renaissance Humanism," *Albertiana*, v. 11-12 (2008-2009), pp. 83-104 (p. 89).

[52] For the revival and reception of Plautus in early modern Europe see Richard F. Hardin, "Encountering Plautus in the Renaissance: A Humanist Debate on Comedy," *Renaissance Quarterly*, v. 60, n. 3 (2007), pp. 789-818.

Arpino: *O sacro Pan, pietà dei tuoi servi!*

Ruzante: *Tu mi vuoi dare del pane? Suvvia, andiamo*.

Arpino: *Oh ingrati manicatori, più rozzi dei buoi!*

Ruzante: *Cosa vuoi: che ti masturbi, o campagnone?*

(Arpino: Oh hallowed Pan, [have] pity on your servants!

Ruzante: You want to give me some bread? Well come on, let's go.

Arpino: Oh ungrateful scroungers, cruder than oxen!

Ruzante: What's that you want: to masturbate, oh funny chap?)[53]

As the play continues, the coarse, unself-conscious naturalism of the peasant dialect has a demystifying effect on the rarefied atmosphere of the pastoral. The elevated ideals of the Arcadian shepherds are emptied of import by the rustic realism of the peasant world dominated by financial oppression, personal welfare, and lower bodily functions.[54] The counter-literary immediacy and comedic vitality of Ruzante renders the Arcadian shepherds into vapid stereotypes, suggesting that the lofty values vaunted by the pastoral eclogue – so popular among Venice's cultural elite – had become clichés to be manipulated. By contaminating pastoral theater with rural dialects and scatological allusions, Beolco's *La Pastoral* presents a kind of cultural antagonism in that it catered to the urban elite's fascination with anti-peasant satire while mocking the growing propensity among Venetian *literati* toward Tuscan and implicitly ridiculing impractical, high-mindedness.

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[53] Angelo Beolco (Ruzante), *La Pastoral; La prima oratione; Una lettera Giocosa*, ed. Giorgio Padoan (Padua: Antenore, 1978), p. 118, v. 589-593. Padoan's analysis of the script describes "*manticatori*" as people who always think of filling their stomachs and "*compagnone*" as someone always ready for a good time.

[54] See the analyses of *La Pastoral* in Giuseppe Gerbino, *Music and the Myth of Arcadia in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 142-157; Ronnie Ferguson, *The Theatre of Angelo Beolco (Ruzante): Text, Context and Performance* (Ravenna: Longo, 2000), esp. pp. 16-17; and Linda L. Carroll, *Angelo Beolco (Il Ruzante)* (Boston: Twayne, 1990), pp. 7-15.

By invoking the effect of *contaminatio* in relation to the works of Mantuanus, Beolco, and Pordenone, I do not mean to suggest a simple equivalency between painting and poetry. Nor do I wish to argue that Pordenone was directly inspired by contemporary debates about the *questione della lingua,* despite the precocious *Regole grammaticali della lingua volgare* (1516) composed by the pordenonese Gian Francesco Fortunio.[55] Rather, by the start of the sixteenth century *contaminatio* was a common imitative practice employed by both artists and writers, and one that could be employed, as the above examples indicate, to encourage meditation on human experience in brazenly materialistic terms and often with the purpose of social commentary.

Local awareness of the rhetorical potential of blending dialects is explicitly acknowledged in the vernacular writings of Pordenone's most celebrated theologian, Petrus Haedus (1427-1504).[56] In 1486 the former vicar of the church of San Marco[57] prepared a translation of the *Office of the Virgin*, which includes an appended poem recording how he believed the message of his translation could be best communicated:

> "*ho posto il dir toscano col lombardo in questa nova mia translazione; ho l'un parlar con l'altro temperato*

[55] For more on Fortunio see Benedetti, "La cultura umanistica in Pordenone e l'accademia liviana," p. 20.
[56] On the life and works of Petrus Haedus (also known as Pietro Capretto, Cavretto, Del Zochol, Giògolo, Edo, Edus, Haedo, and Crysaedus) see Benedetti, "La cultura umanistica in Pordenone e l'accademia liviana," pp. 9, 21-24; Idem, "Pietro Capretto Pordenonese, dotto sacerdote e umanista," *Il Noncello*, n. 18 (1962), pp. 3-91; Idem, *Storia di Pordenone*, pp. 211ff.; Giosuè Chiaradia, *Pietro Capretto (1426? – 1504) e le sacre rappresentazioni di Pordenone* (Pordenone: Grafiche Editoriali Artistiche Pordenonesi, 1980), pp. 7-36; Armando Balduino, "Le esperienze della poesia volgare," in *Storia della cultura veneta: dal primo quattrocento al concilio di Trento,* eds. Girolamo Arnaldi and Manlio Pastore Stocchi, 6 vols. (Vicenza: Neri Pozza Editore, 1976-1986), III, pp. 324-349, esp. 328-331; and Silvano Cavazza, "Le scuole e la vita culturale dal medio evo al Cinquecento," in *La Chiesa concordiese, 389-1989*, II, pp. 101-111, esp. 105-107.
[57] Haedus was vicar from 1475-77.

(I have set down spoken Tuscan with Lombard in this my new translation; I have the one mode of speaking tempered with the other)."[58]

His reason for doing so was to make the Tuscan more intelligible to a pordenonese audience and because when pronounced it would bring pleasure and delight ("*piacqua e delette*") to every pious mind that hears it.[59] This was not Haedus' first attempt to negotiate the strengths of distinct dialects to enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of his message. Two years prior (1484) he had translated from Latin the *Costitutioni de la patria del friuoli* (issued by the Patriarch Marquando di Randeck in 1366) and arrived at a very different conclusion.[60] In this case, neither *toscano* nor *friulano* would suffice: the former because its elegance would be too obscure for the Friulians and the latter because it was not universal to all of Friuli and because it would be a poor thing if someone tried to write it or pronounce it who was not well-practiced in its vocabulary and accents.[61] Instead, Haedus opted for the *volgare venezianeggiante*, that is, the "*lengua trivisana,*"

[58] Pietro Capretto, *Officio de Nostra Dona*, ed. Francesco De Nicola (Genova: Tilgher, 1977), p. 120. The first verse has been scraped away but vestigial markings are legible, suggesting the following elaboration: "*P*[*ietro Capretto da Pordenaone*] */ manda salute e dice al suo Gerardo: / non te meravigliar se io son tardo / a satisfar a tua intenzione. / perché non legiermente se expone / le prophezie, né senza reguardo / ho posto il dir toscano col lombardo / in questa nova mia traslazione; / ho l'un parlar con l'altro temperato, / seguendo il dir toscano tuttavia, / pur che non sia oscuro o poco usato, / acciò che più intelligibil sia / quel che se dice, e ben pronunciato, / piacqua e delette ad ogni mente pia...*" (Pietro Capretto of Pordenone sends his blessings and says to his Gherardo: do not wonder if I am late in satisfying your intention. Because not lightly does one set forth the prophecies, nor without regard have I set down spoken Tuscan with Lombard in this my new translation; I have the one mode of speaking tempered with the other, following the spoken Tuscan nonetheless, even though it is neither obscure or little used, so that that which is said and well pronounced is more intelligible to please and delight every pious mind…). The sonnet is addressed to a Gerardo, presumably Gherardo de Lisa de Flandria, but as far we know the manuscript was not published.

[59] Ibid. There was, of course, a poetic tradition of bilingual expressionism in Padua that had already matured by the fourteenth century in the works of Francesco di Vannozzo and Marsilio da Carrara, but these earlier experiments lacked the self-consciousness of process that Haedus' poem reveals. It should also be noted that it was among the Paduans that the artificial language of the Macaronic was developed. See Ivano Paccagnella, "Origini Padovane del Macaronico: Corado e tifi," in *Storia della cultura veneta: dal primo quattrocento al concilio di Trento,* eds. Girolamo Arnaldi and Manlio Pastore Stocchi, 6 vols. (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1976-1986), III, pp. 413-429.

[60] Pietro Capretto, *Costituzioni della patria del Friuli nel volgarizzamento di Pietro Capretto del 1484 e nell'edizione latina del 1565*, eds. Anna Gobessi and Ermanno Orlando (Rome: Viella, 1998).

[61] It is interesting to note that Haedus believed a tempered Tuscan would be intelligible to the Pordenonese members of the confraternity dei Battuti, but too obscure for Friulians more generally.

for many of the same reasons he chose to temper the language of the *Officio*: for the sake of clarity, intelligibility, and decorum.[62] Whereas a tempered *toscano/lombardo* was considered most pleasing for the singing of the *Officio*, the *lengua trivisana* of the *Costitutioni*, which "shares much of its vocabulary with all the Italian languages" (*partecipa in molti vocabuli con tutte le lingue italiane*) would maximize the text's Friulian audience.[63]

Unlike Mantuanus, Haedus does not violate the decorum of a particular genre of poetry and is by no means as polemical as Beolco, but the tempered language of the *Officio* provides an important local example of creative comingling and an awareness of its practical use.[64] To some degree, contamination is inherent to all forms of imitation (conscious or otherwise), but my interest lies less in how the resultant "tissue of

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[62] "*Volendo adoncha dar principio a cotal opera e considerando la varietà de li paesi, sono varie anchora le lingue italiane, però, volendone io elezer una che fosse condecente e conforme non tanto a la materia del volume, quanto a le persone a chi per alguna casone tal costitutioni ponno esser necessarie et non me parendo conveniente la elegantia de la toschana lengua per esser troppo oscura a li populi furlani, né anchora la furlana, tra perché non è universale in tutto il Friule e tra perché mal se può scrivere e pezo, lezendo, pronunciare, et specialmente da chi non è praticho ne li vocabuli et accenti furlani, imaginai in tal translazione dovermi acostar più tosto a la lengua trivisana che ad altra, per esser assai expedita e chiara et intelligibile da tutti, come quilla che, segondo il mio giudicio, partecipa in molti vocabuli con tutte le lingue italiane*" (Wishing therefore to give beginning to such a work and considering the variety of the regions, even the Italian tongues are various. However, wanting to choose one of them that would be suitable and consistent not so much to the material of the volume as to the people for whom such constitutions could be necessary for any reason and not seeming appropriate to me the elegance of the Tuscan tongue, being too obscure to the Friulian people, nor the Friulian tongue because it is not universal throughout the Friuli and because it would be a poor thing if someone tried to write it and, while reading, pronounce it, especially by someone who is not well practiced in its vocabulary and Friulian accents, I imagined in such translation that I should approach instead to the Trivisan tongue rather than another, for being very expedient and clear and intelligible by all, such that, according to my judgment, it shares much of its vocabulary with all the Italian languages), Episotola*,* fol. 1v, Ibid., pp. 103-104.

[63] Ibid., p. 104.

[64] The influence of the members of the Accademia Liviana on local thought and literary experiments was probably negligible. This "*accademia*," or small circle of humanists who had gathered around Bartolomeo d'Alviano, probably did not exist for much more than a single summer (1508) and its "members" had no students or successors that remained in Pordenone. The group is first mentioned by Paolo Giovio in his *Elogio del Giovanni Cotta* and lists the following members: Girolamo Fracastoro (Fracastorius), Andrea Navagero (Naugerius), and Girolamo Borgia (Hieronimus Borgius). For the relevant passages see Benedetti, "La cultura umanistica in Pordenone e l'accademia liviana," p. 31, nt. 97. See also Silvano Cavazza, "Le scuole e la vita culturale dal medio evo al Cinquecento," in *La Chiesa concordiese,* II, pp. 101-111 (p. 109).

subtexts," as Thomas Greene described it, constitutes a homogenization of sources than in how the act of contamination, as a process of bringing diverse elements into contact (*contamino*), can be utilized to invite reflection on the boundaries between different modes of representation, narrative devices, visual tropes, and their respective possibilities.[65]

Despite the soft chromatic transitions between figures, Pordenone's composition of saints and landscape creates a sense of rupture rather than continuity: the dark hillock that descends from the right effectively removes the saints both physically and spiritually from the landscape and compresses them into a space held in tension with the surface of the picture plane (figure 10).[66] The discontinuity between the saints and the background, as well as between Christopher and the Virgin, creates the impression of a montage, as though the saints were superimposed onto a sweeping landscape. Such a disjunctive intersection might be said to mark a departure from the formal and emotional coalescence of man and nature found in some of Giorgione's and Titian's works. But it might also be more broadly suggestive of a poetics of grafting that Stephen Campbell has identified in

[65] For the quote see Greene, *The Light in Troy*, p. 158. For a discussion of how contamination can result in productive confusion see Looney, *Compromising the Classics*, esp. pp. 19-26.

[66] My discussion here draws on Cohen's observation that the hillock behind the holy figures separates them from the landscape and that the tone of atmosphere in no way corresponds to the diverse psychology of the figures. Idem, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 88. This is in direct contradiction to Leonello Venturi's view of the painting: "*Ma il pittore trova il suo equilibrio tra unità della scena e personalità delle figure nella magnifica pala della Madonna della Misericordia, dipinta per il Duomo di Pordenone nel 1515*," in *Giorgione e il Giorgionismo*, p. 185. This view has been perpetuated by Giuseppe Bergamini, "La pittura in Friuli al tempo dell'Amalteo," in *Pomponio Amalteo: Pictor Sancti Viti 1505-1588*, Exh. Cat., Chiesa di San Lorenzo, San Vito al Tagliamento, 29 Sept. - 17 Dec. 2006, eds. Caterina Furlan and Paolo Casadio (Milan: Skira, 2006), pp. 117-131 (pp.119-120). It should also be noted that, while underlining Pordenone's dependency on a Giorgionesque conception of landscape in his discussion of the London *Satyr Family,* Ugo Soragni noted a dimensional incongruity (*l'incongruenza dimensionale*) between the figures and the landscape that ruined the perception of coherent proportional relationships. However, Soragni does not suggest a possible motivation for this incongruity. Idem, "Un "inedito" Giorgionesco. La famiglia del satiro di Giovanni Antonio de' Sacchis (il Pordenone)," p. 213.

the works of the same artists, as well as in the engravings of Giulio Campagnola.[67] As is often noted, Campagnola's *Ganymede* (ca. 1500) presents a landscape copied from Albrecht Dürer's engraving of the *Madonna with the Monkey* (ca. 1498). This landscape provides the setting for the young boy's abduction by Jupiter, whose aquiline form, like that of the child's, is indebted to Mantegna (figure 39).[68] The effect of conspicuous juxtaposition within Campagnola's work is not unlike the composite character of Pordenone's painting with its paratactic placement of the figures, but Campagnola's *Ganymede* lacks Pordenone's pejorative inflection. It is precisely the oppositional underpinnings of Pordenone's defiled Arcadian realm that distinguish his painting and provide it with a polemical edge. The incongruence between the parts does not reveal a lack of judicious manipulation but a provocative alternative to the unitary coherence upon which the grace and beauty of a composition is said, in Albertian theory, to depend.

The montage-like effect of the composition upsets the picture's rational coherence and seamless transparency as the illusion of an open window, creating a tension that is further compounded by the fact that not one but two infant Christ children are brought into proximity in the foreground: one astride the shoulders of Saint Christopher and the other held by Saint Joseph (figures 10, 14, 15). Like the diminutive size of the donors, the doubling of the Christ child is an archaic convention of Italian altarpiece painting, but

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[67] Campbell, "Naturalism and Venetian "Poesia": Grafting, Metaphor, and Embodiment…," p. 117. See also Rebecca Zorach's discussion of Joachim du Bellay's *Defense et illustration de la langue française,* which employs metaphors of cultivation and grafting to understand the relationship between the French language, Greek, and Latin. Idem, *Blood, Milk, Ink, Gold: Abundance and Excess in the French Renaissance*, p. 141.

[68] Cf. David Alan Brown, "Giulio Campagnola: the Printmaker as Painter," *Artibus et historiae*, n. 61 (2010), pp. 83-97, esp. pp. 85-86. See also Campbell's discussion of Campagnola's *Saturn* (1507), in which a Dürerian landscape is invaded by an *all'antica* river god drawn from an ancient gem. Campbell, "Naturalism and Venetian "Poesia": Grafting, Metaphor, and Embodiment…," p. 117. For the identification of the gem as a cornelian intaglio formerly owned by Lorenzo de' Medici see Paul Holberton, "Notes on Giulio Campagnola's Prints," *Print Quarterly*, v. 13, is. 4 (1996), pp. 397-400.

one that appears jarringly intrusive in the new language of naturalistic painting, which presupposes a unity of time and space.[69] The particular interference this creates between different pictorial imperatives underscores the idea that Pordenone's contaminate practice is not only a means of opposing the dominant artistic culture of Venice, but also a way of exploring the conditions of altarpiece-making and the question of how material images can allude to sacred truth.

Duplication as *figura*

Vasari was strongly opposed to such duplications. When commissioned to paint a Madonna and Child with Christopher and "*un altro Cristo piccolo sopra la spalla*" (another small Christ over the shoulder), he proclaimed such a thing to be *mostruosa* (monstrous).[70] This testimony has led scholars mistakenly to regard the duplication as a provincial phenomenon and ignore cosmopolitan examples such as the *Votive Picture of Doge Giovanni Mocenigo* (after 1478) attributed to Gentile and Giovanni Bellini (figure

[69] Examples of this repetition can be found throughout northern Italy, although scholars have repeated ignored or failed to take adequate account of it. Other near-contemporary examples include: Francesco Bonsignori, *Pala Dal Bovo*, 1484, formerly of the church of San Fermo Maggiore, now Verona, Museo di Castelvecchio; Marcello Fogolino, *Madonna and Child with saints James, Daniel(?), and Christopher*, Brugnera, parish church; Gaudenzio Ferrari, *Madonna and Child with Saints under an Orange Tree*, Vercelli, Duomo; Galeazzo Campi, *Virgin and Child with the Young Saint John the Baptist and Saints Christopher and Catherine of Siena*, formerly in the church of San Domenico, now Cremona, La Pinacoteca Ala Ponzone. The appearance of Saint Christopher and accompanying child at Christ's crucifixion is also interesting. For which, see the painting variously attributed to Bernardino Pinturicchio, Fiorenzo di Lorenzo, and Perugino of *Christ Crucified between Saints Jerome and Christopher*, ca. 1473, Rome, Galleria Borghese. A northern comparison is Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen, *Crucifixion with Saints and Donors*, ca. 1515, Amsterdam, Amstelkring Museum.

[70] Vasari, *Le Vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, VI, pp. 301-302. Vasari's solution to the problem was to paint Christopher kneeling beside the Virgin, who places the Christ child upon his shoulders: "*Finalmente voltosi a Giorgio Vasari, ebbe anco con esso lui delle difficultà, e si durò fatica a trovar modo che le cosa si accomodasse; perciocchè essendo quella cappella intitolata in San Iacopo ed in San Cristofano, vi voleva colui la Nostra Donna col Figliuolo in collo, e poi al San Cristofano gigante un altro Cristo piccolo sopra la spalla. La qual cosa, oltre che parea mostruosa, non si poteva accomodare, nè fare un gigante di sei in una tavola di quattro braccia. Giorgio adunque, disideroso di servire Bernardino, gli fece un disegno di questa maniera. Pose sopra le nuvole la Nostra Donna con un sole dietro le spalle, ed in terra fece San Cristofano ginocchioni con una gamba nell'acqua da uno de'lati della tavola, e l'altra in atto di moverla per rizzarsi, mentre la Nostra Donna gli pone sopra le spalle Cristo fanciullo con la palla del mondo in mano*."

40).[71] In this painting church and state are brought together in the Doge's supplication of the Virgin and Child, who appear on the left with Saint Christopher and another Christ child. Commissioned during the plague of 1478 for an elite urban audience, the function of this votive *pro remedio animae* is made explicit in the petitionary prayer inscribed on the side of the altar: to maintain divine protection for the city, its senate, and the donor.[72] As a work created by the city's premiere artists for the head of state, this picture can hardly be considered provincial. Charles Hope has suggested that in such cases the infant Christ does not appear "as a character in his own right but as an attribute of his mother" or another character.[73] This "commonsensical" approach to Christ's duplication diminishes the important Eucharistic and Incarnational connotations of his presence – connotations that could have been available to viewers within a private devotional or liturgical setting. Moreover, by relegating Christ's status to an attribute, this view suggests an eschewal of his sovereignty within the economy of grace.

Within Pordenone's *Misericordia* altarpiece, the duplication of the Christ child grates against the logic of naturalistic painting, suggesting a number of effects. First, it must have been unsettling for early beholders. Beyond Vasari's reproof, Pordenone's own student, Pomponio Amalteo, whose works typically depend on his master's, avoided the repetition when he painted a similar collection of saints sharing a single child in a

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[71] For the accusation that doubling the Christ child is a provincial gaucherie see Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, p. 90; and Bruno Molajoli, ed., *Mostra del Pordenone e della pittura friulana del Rinsacimento*, Exh. Cat. (Udine: Edizione de "La Panarie," 1939), p. 76. As noted in the Introduction, the scholarship on Pordenone has routinely (and wrongly) used the term *popolaresco* to excuse the anomalies of his paintings as the product of incomplete understanding or a lack of intellectual sophistication.

[72] "URBEM REM VENETAM SERVA VENETAMQ SENETAM ET MIHI SI MEREOR VIRGO SUPERNA AVE (Hail Celestial Virgin, preserve the City and Republic of Venice, and the Venetian Senate, and extend your protection to me if I deserve it)." For the translation see http://archive.org/stream/descriptiveandh04worngoog/descriptiveandh04worngoog_djvu.txt.

[73] Charles Hope, "Altarpieces and Requirements of Patrons," in *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, ed. Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990), pp. 535-571 (p. 544).

frescoed altarpiece at the church of San Luigi at Portogruaro (figure 41).[74] Second, through its very awkwardness Pordenone points to a highly self-aware confrontation of some representational problems – among them the representability of Christ's Incarnation, the co-existence of his human and divine natures, and his multiplication in the Eucharistic species. The innocuous, even homely appearance of the Christ children in the *Misericordia* altarpiece is naturalistic to the point of banality. The repetition of his person, on the other hand, is deeply estranging. It is as if the artist was disfiguring a naturalistic mode of representation to mark the non-resemblance between earthly and divine things. In this sense, I believe that the doubling of Christ within a realm of everyday, domestic appearances should be regarded as an attempt to visualize the mystery of his divinity without recourse to the obvious tropes of artfulness such as haloes, conspicuous effulgence, or other celestial accoutrements.[75] This quirky inflection on the dual presence of Christ reveals an artist pushing older conventions to the point where they are defamiliarized.

Over two decades ago Georges Didi-Huberman drew attention to a process of pictorial exegesis by which similarly defamiliarizing elements operate as *figurae* or what, in this case, may be thought of as deceptive forms that transgress the boundaries of historical time and physical space in order to signal a hidden allusion or mystery that is both in and beyond the appearance of the things represented.[76] Similarly, the duplication

[74] Prior to Amalteo, the Tuscan painter, Bartolomeo della Gatta, had employed this strategy in his *Virgin and Child with Saints James and Christopher*, ca. 1486, Marciano della Chiana, Chiesa di Santi Andrea e Stefano. See the discussion in Daniela Corrente, "La Pala di Marciano di Bartolomeo della Gatta," *Studi Giorgioneschi*, v. 9-10 (2005-2006), pp. 14-18.

[75] Cf. Stephen Campbell's "sacred naturalism" in "Renaissance Naturalism and the Jewish Bible", pp. 291-327.

[76] Georges Didi-Huberman, *Fra Angelico: Dissemblance and Figuration*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); and Alexander Nagel, "Review of *Fra Angelico: Dissemblance and Figuration* by Georges Didi-Huberman," *Art Bulletin*, v. 78, n. 3 (1996), pp. 559-565; Bernard Barryte,

of Christ in Pordenone's altarpiece has the potential to operate in an anagogical sense, for the Christ children, when read in their impossible simultaneity, do not simply designate the human manifestation of the Word Incarnate, but also the unfathomable mystery of his divine nature. The multiple bodies of Christ resonate with the Eucharistic metaphysics of the One and the Many in a way that is visually confounding. The resultant ambiguity of the duplication suggests that the appeal and efficacy of the image is not in the way it enforces a single or fixed doctrinal message but in the way it activates interpretation by encouraging the viewer to question what he or she is looking at. This point is crucial, for the tension this redundancy places on the referential capacity of the image advocates a traditional aspiration of Christian image use: to transcend the sensible, outward image of Christ to focus on the idea of Christ. This is not to say that any profound theological learning was required on the part of Pordenone or his local audience; rather, such effects might be characterized as a kind of devout perplexity that signals an awareness of the popular questioning of such issues at a time when the frontiers of orthodox belief were becoming uncertain.[77]

"Review of *Fra Angelico: Dissemblance and Figuration* by Georges Didi-Huberman," *Renaissance Quarterly*, v. 50, n. 4 (1997), pp. 1261-1262. For the history of the term, see Erich Auerbach, "Figura," in *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp. 11-76.

[77] See, for example, the early but still important characterizations of Italian religious life in Federico Chabod, "Per la storia religiosa dello Stato di Milano durante il dominio di Carlo V. Note e documenti (1937)," in *Lo Stato e la vita religiosa a Milano nell'epoca di Carlo V*, 2 vols. (Turin: Einaudi, 1971), I, pp. 231-373; and Delio Cantimori, *Eretici italiani del Cinquecento* (Florence: Sansoni, 1939). A review of the polemics that have characterized descriptions of early modern Italian religiosity can be found in William V. Hudon, "The Papacy in the Age of Reform, 1513-1644," in *Early Modern Catholicism: Essays in Honour of John W. O'Malley, S.J.*, ed. Kathleen M. Comerford and Hilmar M. Pabel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), pp. 46-66. See also John Martin, *Venice's Hidden Enemies: Italian Heretics in a Renaissance City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Massimo Firpo, *Riforma protestante ed eresie nell'Italia del Cinquecento* (Rome: Laterza, 1993); and Salvatore Caponetto, *The Protestant Reformation in Sixteenth-Century Italy*, trans. Anne C. Tedeschi and John Tedeschi (Kirksville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1999).

Much of what has been argued about Giorgione's and early Titian's poetic approaches to painting concerns the growing taste for indeterminacy in Venetian painting and what have been called "aporetic" works of art, or artworks that challenge viewers by suspending the identification of univocal subject matter.[78] Such works engage the imagination with questions that cannot be solved by recourse to iconology. These questions are often posed by withholding visual information to produce a kind of "looseness of reference" as can be found, for example, in Giorgione's *Three Philosophers* or Titian's *Concert champêtre* (figures 31 and 42).[79] Unlike these works, the tension that Pordenone's *Misericordia* altarpiece places on the referential capacity of the image does not depend on the selective concealment or absence of visual information (nor on the valorization of a preliminary phase of composition), but on a disconcerting redundancy.[80]

The ambiguity of the duplicated child also encourages the beholder to shift his or her concentration around the composition, a movement that is also advocated by the kneeling donors. Contrary to earlier conventions of the Misericordia type, here the devout do not direct their attention to the Virgin but beyond her to the infant Christ children (figures 10 and 16).[81] By following the supplicants' lines of sight, the beholder's eye is led to the boundaries of the pictorial field. That is, instead of functioning centripetally

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[78] See the essays in Alexander Nagel and Lorenzo Pericolo, eds., *Subject as Aporia in Early Modern Art* (Farnham, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010).

[79] For the breakdown of the referential capacity of the image in early sixteenth-century Venetian art see Alexander Nagel, "Structural Indeterminacy in Early-Sixteenth-Century Italian Painting," in *Subject as Aporia in Early Modern Art,* pp. 17-42.

[80] For a process of reconfiguring subject matter as something preliminary to iconography in order to draw attention to the conditions of creation see Nagel, *The Controversy of Renaissance Art*, pp. 57-61 (esp. p. 59).

[81] On the iconography of the Madonna of Mercy see Gertrud Schiller, *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst*, 5 vols. (Gütersloh: G. Mohn, 1966, reprint 1980), Bd. 4, T. 2, pp. 195-198; Levin, *Studies in the imagery of mercy in late medieval Italian art,* I, p. 435; and Tommaso Castaldi, *La Madonna della Misericordia. L'iconografia della Madonna della Misericordia e della Madonna delle frecce nell'arte di Bologna e della Romagna nel Tre e Quattrocento* (Imola: La Mandragora, 2011), esp. pp. 25-90, 281-296.

with reference to the center, Pordenone's composition operates centrifugally.[82] The attention the kneeling donors place on the figures of Christ underlines his importance for contemplation. Within the *Misericordia* altarpiece both Christ children are integrated into the composition through the donors' acts of looking and as active participants themselves in the exchange of glances. When considered in relation to the saints that bear them, it seems that each child offers a distinct opportunity for questioning and confirming his divinity.

Engineering the Divine Gaze: Recognition and Requisition

Located on the Virgin's right, Saint Christopher cranes his fearsome visage back to meet the confident gaze of the infant (figure 14). In the account of the saint's life recorded in the *Golden Legend*, Christ revealed his divinity to Christopher by applying the weight of the world to the giant's shoulders as he carried Jesus across a stream.[83] However, it was not until the following day when Christopher found that his staff had blossomed into life that he accepted the supremacy of Christ's sovereign majesty. Pordenone condensed both the moment of revelation and the recognition into a single event that is underscored by the reciprocation of gazes.[84] Accordingly, Christopher performs the role of both Christ-bearer and eye-witness to his sanctity. The technique of narrative condensation or prolepsis is typical of earlier depictions of Saint Christopher, as in the fresco at the church of San Michele al Pozzo Bianco in Bergamo, where the river passage and the flowering staff are combined (figure 43). But a cause-and-effect dynamic

[82] This compositional strategy offers another point of contention with Rosand's description of Renaissance altarpieces in which the "the lateral forces of the field operate centripetally." Idem, "'*Divintà di cosa dipinta'*: pictorial structure and legibility of the altarpiece," p. 144.
[83] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: readings on the saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), II, pp. 10-15.
[84] On "recognition" as a narrative device and a visual trope of conversion in northern art, see Mitchell B. Merback, "Recognitions: Theme and Metatheme in Hans Burgkmair the Elder's *Santa Croce in Gerusalemme* of 1504," *Art Bulletin*, v. 96, n. 3 (2014), pp. 288-318.

articulated through the exchange of glances and propelled by the dramatic immediacy of Christopher's comportment is unusual before this time.[85] The pose of Pordenone's Saint Christopher, holding the staff with both hands as he looks up to the child grasping his hair, appears to reflect the artist's knowledge of Giovanni Bellini's *Polyptych of Saint Vincent Ferrer* (figure 44 and 45).[86] Here, too, the kinetic dynamism and swelling form of Pordenone's Christopher is unlike other representations as is the absence of obvious indicators of his sainthood. Aside from the lack of haloes or the orb that Christ carries in the Bergamo fresco, the dignified grace and serene calm that is appropriate for such characters is also missing. Instead, the rapid twist of the saint's body amid the onrushing waves and his look of dawning apprehension evoke a feeling of agitation. As mentioned above, Pordenone's mode of representing sacred subjects could be seen to confront the problem of visualizing the divinity of Christ while simultaneously underlining his humanity, his problematic "realness." Pordenone overcomes this through Christopher's reaction: his look of trepidation reveals to the beholder Christ's power to command the weight of the world. It is by reading Christ in relation to Christopher that his divinity is disclosed.

The popularity of Saint Christopher at the start of the sixteenth century, propounded by his nearly ubiquitous presence in north Italian churches, relied on his inveterate capacity to protect wayfarers from sudden death, plague, and the evil eye.[87] As

[85] An analogous dynamic might be argued for Antonio Aleotti's S*aints Christopher, Sebastian and Roch*, Cesena, Pinacoteca comunale. However, while Aleotti combines the flowering staff and exchange of glances, the restrained expression of his figure of Saint Christopher lacks the surging force and consternation of Pordenone's figure, occluding the suggestion for dramatic peripeteia.
[86] Marcantonio Raimondi's *Portabandiera,* executed after a design by Raphael, has also been suggested as a possible source for Christopher's pose by Francescutti, "La Storia," p. 12.
[87] For the popularity of Saint Christopher at this time see Marta Paraventi, "San Cristoforo, protettore dei viandanti e dei viaggiatori. L'iconografia in Europa, in Italia e nelle Marche," pp. 111-112; and John T. Spike, *San Cristoforo e il Bambin Gesù* (Urbania: Biblioteca e Civico Museo di Urbania, 1996), p. 27.

Erasmus of Rotterdam disdainfully observed, some men had adopted the belief that "if they look at a painting or statue of that huge Polyphemus Christopher, they will not die on that day."[88] Belief in the power of the image of Saint Christopher to protect one from misfortune is also attested to in an inscription that accompanies a mosaic of Saint Christopher at San Marco in Venice (figure 46).[89] Pordenone capitalized on this conviction in the power of looking, manipulating it in this case by visualizing the moment of Christopher's conversion through an exchange of glances. As a demonstration of Christ's power through the act of seeing, the exchange of glances between Christopher and the child constructs a conduit of faith between the divine and his earthly delegate. Conversely, the grace that moves through this conduit is directed out of the picture plane and into the worshipper's space through the agency of Saint Joseph.

Meeting our gaze with his own, Joseph appears to perform the role of interlocutor (figure 15). But far from directing the beholder into the painting, he motions outward into the viewer's space, offering the body of Christ to the beholder in an emphatic gesture that stresses the "literalness" of his presence.[90] Described by Bernard of Clairvaux as the first witness to the Incarnation, Joseph shares his privileged vision with the viewer and his casual presentation of the child emphasizes direct contact with Christ's humanity.[91] As the intermediary between the infant deity and the believer, Joseph's gesture of giving

[88] Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, trans. Clarence H. Miller, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 63.
[89] "*Cristophori sancti faciem quicumque intuetur illo namque die nullo languore tenetur*," reproduced in Michelangelo Muraro, "Review of *Problems in Titian: Mostly Iconographic* by Erwin Panofsky," *Art Bulletin*, v. 54, n. 3 (1972), pp. 353-355 (p. 354).
[90] Carolyn Smyth has written on the quality of "literalness" in Pordenone's later religious paintings in "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes in Cremona Cathedral: an Incitement to Piety," in *Drawing Relationships in Northern Italian Renaissance Art: Patronage and Theories of Invention*, ed. Giancarla Periti, intro. Charles Dempsey (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 101-128.
[91] For Saint Bernard's theology of Joseph see his *Homiliae de laudibus Virginis Mariae* in Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, 221 vols. (Paris: Migne, 1844-64), v. 183, cols. 55-87, 99, 127. See also Wilson, *St. Joseph in Italian Renaissance Society,* pp. 3-5; and Marjory Bolger Foster, *Iconography of St. Joseph in Netherlandish Art, 1400-1550*, Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 1978, I, pp. 21-22.

suggests a collapse of pictorial boundaries through the solicitation of the viewer to receive.[92]

That Joseph was recognized as a conduit for receiving divine mercy is made explicit in the Alleluia appended to the *Office of Saint Joseph* in the late fifteenth century:

> "O prince of patriarchs
> Joseph, lead us
> straight to heaven
> through Christ whom you have carried
> and whom you have placed
> with joy and love in the manger
> next to his chaste mother."[93]

Joseph's role in the scheme of redemption as the foster father of Christ was the subject of renewed interest in the early sixteenth century and drew attention to his responsibility as *Nutritor Domini*.[94] This title indicates more than Joseph's obligation to nourish the infant, it also denotes his role as the protector of Christ and, by extension, the Church. North Italian communities ravaged by attacks from both the north and the east rallied around Joseph as the patron of the Church Militant.[95] Far from that of the simple-minded old codger of apocryphal texts such as the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, Joseph was celebrated

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[9292] An interesting visual precedent for the use of Joseph as an interlocutor can be found in Albrecht Dürer's woodcut of the Holy Family in Egypt (1511). See Cynthia Hahn, "Joseph as Ambrose's »Artisan of the Soul« in the *Holy Family in Egypt* by Albrecht Dürer," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, v. 47, n. 4 (1984), pp. 515-522 (esp. p. 518).

[93] Quoted from Wilson, *St. Joseph in Italian Renaissance Society,* p. 39.

[94] For a discussion of Saint Joseph's multifarious roles in early sixteenth-century Italian society and his status as protector of the Church see Wilson, *St. Joseph in Italian Renaissance Society,* pp. 1-20 and 23. On the intimate contact Joseph enjoyed with Christ as set forth by Saint Bernard see Foster, *Iconography of St. Joseph in Netherlandish Art*, I, pp. 240-244. For the rise of Joseph as a cult figure within the Church see Jörg Traeger, *Renaissance und Religion: Die Kunst des Glaubens im Zeitalter Raphaels* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1997), pp. 61-65.

[95] Wilson, *St. Joseph in Italian Renaissance Society,* p. 9.

as the purveyor of concord, an identity bolstered by Isidoro Isolani's *Summa de donis Sancti Joseph*. Begun in 1514 at Fontanellato near Parma, Isolani wrote:

> "With most holy prayers to Joseph, assuredly not without force,
>
> I myself believed that peace must be restored in Italy."[96]

As guardian of the Church, Joseph makes a fitting pendant to the figure of the Madonna of Mercy, who shelters the supplicants with her protective mantle. Moreover, the gesture of offering the body of Christ to the beholder underscores an additional component to his role as provider, one that corresponds to the Eucharistic rites performed on the altar below the painting. Much like the officiating priest, Joseph distributes Christ's physical body. Saint Ambrose advocated the characterization of Joseph as a priestly figure, describing him as a *typus apostolorum* who married the Church to enlarge and strengthen the faith.[97] This conception of Joseph was elaborated at the end of the fourteenth century by the Franciscan Peter John Olivi in his *postilla* on Matthew 1:

> "Joseph represents God the Father or Christ because he is the spouse of the Church; he is also the type of the bishops, spouses of the Church…and in the evangelical Word through the spirit of Christ, Joseph is also the image of the Roman pontiffs, installed as guardians of the Church."[98]

Olivi's characterization of Joseph as an exemplar of pastoral duty suggests one avenue for interpreting his action in the painting. However, Joseph's offer to the viewer appears less as an instruction than as a provocation. He merely presents the child; it is up

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[96] "*Sanctissimis Ioseph precibus haud profecto leviter pacem ego ipse reddendam Italiae crediderim,*" from Isidoro Isolani's dedication to the *Summa de donis Sancti Ioseph* (first publ. Pavia, 1522), reproduced with a Spanish translation in Bonifacio Llamera, *Teología de San José* (Madrid: Editorial Católica, 1953), p. 364.

[97] For Saint Ambrose's characterization of Joseph as a *typus apostolorum* see Carolyn Smyth, *Correggio's Frescoes in Parma Cathedral* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 85.

[98] The translation is from Sheila Schwartz, "St. Joseph in Meister Bertram's Petri-Altar," *Gesta*, v. 24, n. 2 (1985), pp. 147-156 (p. 152).

to the viewer to resolve the question of belief that this act of presentation poses. As with the Saint Christopher group, the question of faith is similarly posited through an act of looking. What is omitted in this case is the evidence of recognition. The question of Christ's theophanic power and physical presence in the Eucharist is intensified by the lack of divine attributes, his innocuous appearance, as well as by the manner in which Joseph handles the child. Turned on his side, Christ is presented unceremoniously like the Passover lamb ignorant of his sacrificial destiny. As alluded to above, the de-sanctification of Christ could be described as symptomatic of the laity's desire for more direct contact with his humanity.[99] But such a desire is also forestalled in Pordenone's altarpiece: contiguous with the collapse of boundaries and direct contact insinuated by Joseph's action is the continued distinction and distance between earthly and divine figures that characterizes the relationship between the Virgin and the donors.

The value and authority of the Madonna of Mercy lay in her capacity to intervene on behalf of the devout, delivering them from present and future troubles. One of the prerequisites for the efficacy of this image type lay in the reproduction of a verified formula.[100] The conventional Misericordia type consists of the standing, frontally posed

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[99] One of the most popularly-cited testimonials to such a desire is the statement left by Pietro Paolo Boscoli while preparing for his execution in February 1513: "*Io vorrei che l'umanità di Cristo mi s'offerissi, e vorrelo comprendere, come se uscissi d'un bosco e facessimo incontro* (I would like Christ's humanity to offer itself to me, and I would like to perceive him, as if Christ came out of a forest to meet me)." For the translation, see Adriano Prosperi, "The Religious Crisis in Early Sixteenth-Century Italy," in *Lorenzo Lotto: Rediscovered Master of the Renaissance*, eds. David Alan Brown, Peter Humfrey and Mauro Lucco, Exh. Cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2 November 1997 – 1 March 1998 (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 21-28 (p. 22). For more on the laity's fascination with Christ's humanity in the sixteenth century and how its expression has been interpreted as a crisis in traditional ritual practice see Firpo, *Riforma protestante ed eresie nell'Italia del Cinquecento*; Silvana Seidel Menchi, *Erasmo in Italia, 1520-1580* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 1987), esp. pp. 143-175; and Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983).

[100] See Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien*, 3 vols. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955-1959), II, pp. 112-119. For a few discussions about how the authority of an image type is conferred, see Joseph L. Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of

Virgin flanked by smaller figures enveloped by her mantle. Unlike his contemporaries Rosso Fiorentino, Fra Bartolomeo, and Moretto who adjusted the formula to accommodate a more naturalistic figure scale while retaining the impression of hierarchy and decorum, Pordenone's diminution of the supplicants, whose individualizing features are suggestive of portraits, appears pointedly awkward, creating a conceptual interference between archaic convention and a modern naturalistic aesthetic (figures 10, 16, 47, 48, 49). Although it is not specified in the contract, Cohen has claimed that "Pordenone's patron…no doubt insisted that he respect the traditional hierarchy of scale in the portraits."[101] This assumption is unqualified and weakened by the fact that the donor portraits in Pordenone's religious paintings, with perhaps two exceptions, are almost always painted smaller than their heavenly advocates.[102] The preservation of this archaic figure scale, therefore, is not simply a consequence of his patron's demands, but about maintaining the convention. However, in view of both contemporary experimentation with the Misericordia Madonna and Pordenone's own destabilization of the Virgin's preeminence within the painting, I believe that there is more at stake here than the transmission of apotropaic potency. Again, we are faced with the overlapping representational concerns of Pordenone's contaminate practice. And I believe that the artist's utilization of this formula also has the potential to reflect contemporary attitudes regarding the character of man's relation to the divine.

Chicago Press, 1993), p. 84; Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, esp. pp. 432-442; and Mosche Barasch, *Icon: Studies in the History of an Idea* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), esp. pp. 230-243, 279-284.

[101] Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 90.

[102] Cf. *St Francis Crowned by Poverty, Obedience and Chastity Adored by Donors,* ca. 1532-33, church of San Francesco, Gallipoli. Oddly enough, Cohen also recognizes that Pordenone typically maintains this hierarchy of scale in *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 90.

Contrast in figure scale had been an important vehicle in earlier Christian art for symbolizing the difference between man's inherent imperfection and the divine ideal to which he aspires. However, in Pordenone's painting this difference is figured in additional ways. The small size of the supplicants required certain exaggerations of form for the sake of visual clarity, such as enlarged heads (figure 16). This emphasizes a stylistic but also a conceptual division between the beauty of the saints and the shrunken, almost caricature-like depiction of the supplicants; a juxtaposition of figures rendered according to dissimilar aesthetic criteria to reinforce the difference between the sacred and the profane while placing them in proximity to one another. In this way, Pordenone's characterization of the petitioners as lacking proportional harmony includes the implication that they are aberrations or corruptions of the heavenly exemplars.

Local Lessons: Petrus Haedus on the Subservience of Man

It has been demonstrated by John O'Malley that the theology promoted by the papal court during the reigns of Popes Julius II and Leo X emphasized the special efficacy of Christ's Incarnation.[103] In their soteriology, the court theologians advocated the idea that the Incarnation not only reconciled Adam's sin, but elevated the dignity of humanity beyond that of prelapsarian man. If this was indeed the case, the papal court's view of a restored humanity is a long way off from what we find in the war-torn plains of western Friuli. In the town of Pordenone, a far more practical and archaic soteriology of

[103] John W. O'Malley, "The Theology behind Michelangelo's Ceiling," in *The Sistine Chapel: the Art, the History, and the Restoration* (New York: Harmony Books, 1986), pp. 92-148 (p. 138 for the quotation). For more on Incarnational theology see Idem, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court c. 1450-1521* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979), esp. ch. 4; Charles Trinkaus, *In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); and Salvatore Corporeale, "Renaissance Humanism and the origins of Humanist Theology," in *Humanity and Divinity in Renaissance and Reformation: Essays in Honor of Charles Trinkaus*, eds. John W. O'Malley, Thomas M. Izbicki, and Gerald Christianson (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1993), pp. 101-124.

atonement was promulgated in the works of the aforementioned theologian, Petrus Haedus. As the former vicar of the church of San Marco, Haedus' conception of man's subservient condition provides an important context for considering how devout beholders might have understood Pordenone's characterization of the donors as diminutive, insubstantial derivations of their heavenly advocates.

Haedus is perhaps best known for his dialogue on the nature of love, *De amoris generibus* or *Anterotica* (1492), which enjoyed the praise of Mario Equicola and the Friulian humanist and benefactor Count Jacopo di Porcia.[104] The dialogue begins with a dinner at the house of the poet Cimbriaco in Pordenone, where the author and Antonio Fileremo Fregoso admire an image of Eros (*cupidinis simulachro*).[105] The painting initiates a dialogue that records a series of glosses on the recondite symbolism of love, its various manifestations, and its torturous effects. About halfway through (fol. 40r-42r), the dialogue insensibly shifts towards a description of hell and eternal suffering, but not as a means of amplifying the torments of love through analogy. Instead, the author's deliberations on eternal suffering are intended as an exhortation against the temptations of desire, for at the last judgment, Haedus writes, "not only actions and words but also thoughts will be judged, so that not even the smallest mischief would be without

[104] First published in 1492 by Gherardo de Lisa de Flandria. Subsequent editions of the *Anterotica* were published in 1498, 1503, and 1608. Gherardo published other important works by Haedus, including his translation of the *Costitutioni de la Patria de Friuli* (1484). Gherardo maintained printing presses in Cividale and Udine. See Alessandro Giacomello, "Stampa e scrittura," in *Società e Cultura del Cinquecento nel Firuli Occidentale*, pp. 189-196. For more on the patronage and works of Jacopo di Porcia, see Giuseppe Trebbi, "Iacopo di Porcia, feudatario e umanista," in *Studi in onore di Giovanni Miccoli*, ed. Liliana Ferrari (Trieste: Università degli studi di Trieste, 2004), pp. 115-141.

[105] Pietro Capretto, *Anterotica, sive De amoris generibus* (1492), fol. 6v, online version: http://books.google.com/books?id=959KAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&as_pt=BOOKS&ie=ISO-8859-1&cd=1&source=gbs_api#v=onepage&q&f=false

punishment just as no kindness without reward."[106] The excursus on eternal suffering is of interest not because of what is said (it substantially rehearses arguments from Augustine's *City of God*[107]), but because of the attitude toward the corrupt condition of man that it perpetuates. Far from optimistic, Haedus imagines the last judgment to resemble a tribunal gathered to judge those guilty of capital punishment.[108] He invites the reader to imagine the condemned's state of mind as he is led from his cell to greet the rushing crowds of people, to when he sees the judge seated on the *currulis*, to when he sees the executioner and the instruments of torture.[109] The point is to make the reader conscious of his or her own wickedness; a rhetorical device staged to enhance the impact of the author's subsequent injunction that Christ will judge mercilessly those who have not repented.[110] The didactic tone that emerges in this section of the dialogue is typical of the author's religious writings, as is the technique of clarifying a theological supposition by recourse to imagery and language familiar to material culture and everyday experience. For example, his paraphrased translation of the Marian antiphon *Salve regina*

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[106] Ibid., "*In quo ita omnium non modo facta verbaque expendentur: sed etiam cogitatus: ut ne minimum quidem malum sine poena sit sicut nec ullum sine praemio bonum*," fol. 41v.

[107] Haedus' excursus on the capacity of the soul to feel pain and the nature of eternal fire (fol. XLr-XLIIr) is dependent on book twenty-one of the *City of God*. Cf. Saint Augustine, *City of God Against the Pagans*, trans. Eva Matthews Sanford and William McAllen Green, 7 vols., The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1965), VII, bk 21, esp. ch. 2-4, 9-10, pp. 4-25, 58-69.

[108] "*Ac nunc cogitanti mihi quale id sit futurum: ea mox occurrit imago fori et iudiciorum: quae in reos capitis ferri solent*," Capretto, *Anterotica,* fol. 40v.

[109] "*Quo tandem animo istos esse arbitramini cum in primis se idcirco carcere educi sciunt ut puniantur; cum deinde accurrentem undique populi multitudinem preterea iudicem maximo ac gravissimo assessorum coetu circusemptum insidentemque curruli; denique lictorem carnificem ve: et supplicii ac mortis genus videntur*," Ibid., fol. 40v.

[110] While the literal sense of the following excerpt is slightly confusing, the general sense is clear: Christ, who had been merciful until then, (and because of which man has had occasion to sin) will act at the last judgment without mercy towards those who have not repented: "*At summus ille iudex et deus christus quo nemo humilior nemo benignior nemo misericordior unquam fuit. Est enim ipsa misericordia sicut in primis homini praecepit ne peccaret eique saepe occasionem sustulit peccandi locum: tempus: saepe etiam voluntatem deinde lapsus ad poenitentiam hortatus: qui_mori nollet eum: pro quo ipse cruci affixus necatusque fuisset: numquam misericordiam ad se conversis negandam existimavit sic in perversum contumacemque hominem solam tum iustitiam exercens nulla prorsus misericordia utetur*," Ibid., fol. 41r-41v.

(ca. 1493) for the confraternity of Santa Maria dei Battuti of Pordenone is amplified by such colorful details as a joust against the king of discord.[111] The versicle also makes explicit the lowly place of the faithful, for salvation is sought at the feet of the Madonna ("*le alme chai tuoi piedi son venute"*).[112] Similarly, Haedus' translation of the *Office of the Virgin* makes considerable elaborations to concretize the abstract language of the Latin text into material, quotidian terms. His translation of psalm 99, sung at lauds, exemplifies this tendency:

Psalmus 99	Haedus' translation into the vernacular
Iubilate Deo omnis terra: servite	*Or fate festa a Dio, o tutti vui / che*
Domino in laetitia.	*abitate in l'universa terra, / e con ale-*
Introite in conspectu eius:	*gro cor servite a lui. /*
in exulatione.	*E con fede e speranza che non erra /*
Scitote quoniam Dominus ipse est	*entrate nel benigno suo conspetto, /*
Deus: ipse fecit nos, et non ipsi nos.	*ch'a l'anima devote non se serra. /*
Populus eius, et oves pascuae eius:	*Costui è quel Segnore benedetto / che*
introite portas eius in confessione,	*è sol Dio, il qual ci ha formati / e sol*
atria eius in hymnis confitemini illi.	*a l'omo ha dato l'intelletto. /*
Laudate nomen eius, quoniam sua-	*E da lui semo, non da noi, creati, /*

[111] The hymn, written in enclosed-rhyme quatrains, is published in Pietro Capretto, *Le cantinelle de la Scola dey batudi de Santa Maria de Pordenon de misser pre Piero del Çocholo*, ed. Bepi Carone, Quaderni di "Cantando alla villotta," v. 1 (Pordenone: i Paralipomeni, 1984), n.p.:
Salve regina de misericordia: / vita: dolcezza: et gran speranza nostra / in questa humana giostra: / che noi havemo col re de Discordia / Ad te gridamo o matre de concordia / figliuoli deva miseri sbanditi / preghando che uditi / siano da te li nostri voti et canti / Ad te vegnimo con sospiri et pianti: / gemendo in questa lachrymosa valle / per cui spinoso calle / mal se chamina senza te maria. / De volgi adoncha o advocata pia / verso de noi quei tuoi occhi pietosi / benigni et gratiosi: / che ricorremo ad te con fidel chore / Et dapoi questo exilio et dolore / degnati de monstrarni il dolce aspetto/ del frutto benedetto / christo tuo figlio et nostro salvatore / Exaudi o matre dolce et clementissima / le alme chai tuoi piedi son venute / sol per haver salute: / chimpetrar puoi maria soavissima.
[112] Ibid.

vis Dominus: in aeternum miseric-	*o popolo de Dio, adonca, e tutti / voi*
ordia eius, et usque in generation-	*al divino culto deputati / nel tempo en-*
em, et generationem veritas eius.	*trate non sdegnosi e mutti, / ma con*
Gloria patri, etc.	*piacere e con divina laude / quel con-*
	fessando e non con gli occhi asciutti. /
	E con bon core che piangendo gau-
	de / entrate in la sua sala venerabile, /
	come il cagnuol ch'al suo segnor applaude.
/	*Lodate tutti il nome suo mirabile, /*
	però ch'Egli è segnor dolce e soave /
	e a li preghi de ciascun placabile / e
	porta sempre de pietà la chiave, / come
	colui che ha sempre desio / de dar
	mercede a l'opre buone e prave. /
	Sia glorioso il Patre, ecc.[113]

English rendering of Haedus' translation:

> Make joy to God all of you / that inhabit the terrestrial universe, / & with happy hearts serve him. / & with faith and hope that errs not / come before his benign presence, / that to the devout soul is not closed. / He is that blessed Lord / that is alone God, he who formed us / & only to man did he give intellect. / & from him, not from ourselves, are we created, / Oh people of God, hence, all / you appointed

[113] For Haedus' translation of the *Officio* see Idem, *Officio de Nostra Donna*, ed. Francesco De Nicola (as in note 58 above). For psalm 99 see pp. 43-44, lines 53-77. Two surviving manuscripts of the translation have been identified: one at the Biblioteca Comunale of Udine (ms. 117), which is an incomplete copy of 1505, and a much larger codex at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice (ms. it. IX, 305 [6078]).

to the divine cult / enter the temple without silence and contempt, / but with delight and divine praise / confessing and not with dry eyes. / & with happy hearts that weep joy / enter into his venerable chamber, / like the dog that lauds his master. / All praise his marvelous name, / for he is a sweet and kindly Lord / & to the prayers of each placable / & always out of pity he bears the key, / as with he that always has the desire / to give retribution to works good and wicked. / Glory be to the father, etc.

As Francesco De Nicola has demonstrated, Haedus' version of the hymn begins with a literal translation that quickly expands to reveal a moralizing agenda. "Enter in before his sight: in exaltation" (*Introite in conspectu eius: in exultatione*) becomes instructive: "And with faith and hope that errs not, come before his benign presence, that to the devout soul is not closed" (*E con fede e speranza che non erra / entrate nel benigno suo conspetto, / ch'a l'anima devote non se serra*).[114] The inculcative tone that underlies much of the translation reinforces a conception of man's humble place within the celestial pecking order, one that is made explicit with the analogy to the faithful dog (*il cagnuol ch'al suo segnor applaude*). Such an obsequious image emphasizes the conventionality of Haedus' view toward the devout in their supplication of the divine; a view that is analogously expressed by the diminutive donors of the *Misericordia* altarpiece. De Nicola has argued that Haedus' decision to make the prayers of the *Officio* accessible to a wider public and attempt to enhance their pedagogical efficacy was symptomatic of millennial anxiety and

[114] In a subsequent textual analysis of the *Officio*, De Nicola made several compelling observations that demonstrate Haedus' didactic impetus and desire to clarify the ambiguities of the Latin text. De Nicola also draws attention to the repeated use of quotidian imagery as well as Haedus' willingness to draw on well-known proverbial phrases to make the text more familiar to a lay audience. Idem, "Pietro Edo volgarizzatore dell'officio della Madonna," *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa*, v. 14 (1978), pp. 38-57, esp. pp. 45-47 and 50-51.

widespread dissatisfaction with the corruption of the Church of Rome.[115] The validity of this proposition relies on the surprising inclusion of a baleful Joachimite prophecy by Leonardo Giustinian transcribed on folios 60v-62r of the Marciana translation of the *Officio*.[116] While the particulars of the prophecy refer to early fifteenth-century protagonists, its promise of impending catastrophe led by a great mastiff (*can mastino*) who "with great cruelty will come to Italy with lance and sword" (*con gran crudelitade in Italia verà con lance e spade*) to unleash a tempest, was certainly topical at the start of the sixteenth century and can perhaps help to account for the penitential undertone of Haedus' translation.[117] Given the prophecy's injunctions against the venality of that "*gran vilan*" (the pope), its attachment to the *Officio* brings a critical edge to Haedus' insistent didacticism. For a congregation familiar with Haedus' opinions, Pordenone's characterization of the donors might seem to compliment the erstwhile vicar's pessimistic and anti-humanist understanding of humanity's abject insignificance before God.

The ignoble size and position that characterizes man's spiritual place within the altarpiece is just one component in a matrix of overlapping concerns. As mentioned

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[115] De Nicola, "Pietro Edo volgarizzatore dell'officio della Madonna," p. 57. Haedus' commitment to pastoral care is another important indicator of how different the ecclesiastical situation was in Pordenone at the turn of the century compared to other places in the Friuli. Haedus' dedication to the spiritual welfare of the laity distinguishes the congregation of the church of San Marco from the supposed indifference toward parishioners that Edward Muir has argued was broadly characteristic of the "Friulian Church." See Edward Muir, *Mad Blood Stirring: Vendetta and Factions in Friuli during the Renaissance* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp. 36-37.

[116] The prophecy is written under the date 28 August 1501 and De Nicola believes that it could have been transcribed by Haedus himself. Idem, "Pietro Edo volgarizzatore dell'officio della Madonna," p. 53; and Edo, *Officio de Nostra Donna*, pp. 24-25. Antonio Enzo Quaglio's description of the codex records that the *Officio* runs from folio 1v to 58v, ending with two sonnets. Folios 59-62, he claims, were added later. These later folios include Haedus' translation of the *Te deum laudamus*, the Giustinian prophecy, and then a few Latin distiches all written by the same hand and with the concluding subscript: *Presbiter Petrus Hedus 1504 adj 22 zenar*. Whether or not Haedus transcribed the prophecy himself, it appears to have been appended to the manuscript during his own lifetime. For a transcription and analysis of Giustinian's prophecy see Antonio Enzo Quaglio, "Un sirventese profetico di Leonardo Giustinian," *Lettere italiane*, v. 20, n. 1 (1968), pp. 17-29 (esp. 19-24). For Quaglio's description of the Marciana codex see Idem, "Ancora sulla «profezia» gioachimita di L. Giustinian," *Filologia e critica*, v. 2 (1976), pp. 177-189 (pp. 179-180, nt. 9).

[117] Quaglio, "Un sirventese profetico di Leonardo Giustinian," p. 22, lines 25-26.

above, Pordenone's contaminate mode of making allows interferences between different pictorial imperatives, interferences that reveal an artist deeply engaged with the status of his art, the sustainability of inherited image-types, and the kinds of mediation an altarpiece might offer to those who had visual access to it. Thus far I have attempted to show how the disconcerting effects and unlikely combinations of Pordenone's *Misericordia* altarpiece invite reflection on the adequacy of Venetian pictorial modernism to signify mysteries of the Christian faith and to sustain devotional and liturgical functions of the image. In part, Pordenone utilized certain tenets of a Venetian approach to representation in order to say something at odds with the form of naturalism it espoused. The painting's irreconcilable divisions and distortions resist pressures towards coherence and signal a self-consciousness about style that opposed an aesthetics of organic unity to one that is disjointed and pointedly ambiguous. By contrast, a very different set of conditions governed the realization of the artist's painting for the high altar of San Marco.

"Foreign" Invasion: a High Altarpiece for San Marco

The altarpiece of *Saint Mark Enthroned with Saints George, John the Baptist, Hermagoras, Fortunatus, Jerome and Sebastian with Christ Above* was begun sometime after March 1533 and left unfinished before Pordenone relocated to Venice in July 1535 (figure 50).[118] While at first glance it appears radically divergent from the *Misericordia* altarpiece in terms of the level of finish and formal characteristics, the high altarpiece

[118] The altarpiece replaced a no longer extant painting (ca. 1468) by Andrea Bellunello, in which the poet Cimbriaco was represented with long hair and a tall, conical cap with little wings. See Andrea Benedetti, "L'attività educativa e poetica del Cimbriaco (1449-1499) e la sua influenza nel diffondersi della cultura umanistica in Friuli," *Atti dell'Accademia di Scienze Lettere e Arti di Udine*, serie VII, v. 3 (1960-63), pp. 109-205 (p.118). The woodcarver Giacomo Quirino built the original wooden frame for Pordenone's painting (1535), for which see Furlan, "Per dar maggiore vaghezza et splendore alla chiesa," p. 249. The painting has participated in two exhibitions; see Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, II, p. 691.

similarly presents viewers with competing compositional foci: in this case, between the resurrected Christ in the upper register and the frenetic *sacra conversazione* assembled around Saint Mark below. Another facet the two paintings share is the represented saints' acknowledgement of Christ's divinity through acts of seeing. In *Saint Mark Enthroned*, each figure that turns his gaze heavenward appears as though suddenly overwhelmed with rapturous astonishment. Beyond that, however, the stakes of the game have changed. With Christ plummeting into the scene amongst a tumult of flaming clouds and a supporting cast of *putti*, Pordenone's interest in suggesting Christ's dual nature by way of contrasting a rustic, quotidian naturalism with archaic conventions of north Italian altarpiece painting has clearly waned. And yet, the game is still substantially the same. As will soon become clear, a deliberately contaminate mode of picture-making also underlies Pordenone's *San Marco* altarpiece.

In the two decades that separate these altarpieces, the character of Pordenone's pictorial language changed considerably and often in response to the diverse artistic cultures he encountered. During the years leading up to the artist's final contribution to his native city, Pordenone had interacted with formidable Emilian painters such as Correggio and Parmigianino, as well as with Cremonese and Brescian artists who had developed their own provocative means of challenging the limitations of naturalistic representation.[119] Pordenone had also developed a strikingly aggressive form of projective illusionism for the frescoes he painted in Treviso, Cremona, Piacenza, Venice and elsewhere. On each occasion, local spheres of artistic activity and the traditions they drew from offered unique points of exchange for Pordenone, whose peripatetic career took him as far west as Andrea Doria's court at Genoa and as far south as Alviano in

[119] To be discussed in chapters 2 and 3.

Umbria. Nevertheless, while the range of imitative reference had grown, the *pala* for the high altar of San Marco reveals that within the city of Pordenone, the art of Titian remained the principal point of resistance for Pordenone's process of altarpiece painting.

Throughout his career Pordenone repeatedly returned to his native city. In the course of his travels, the town of Pordenone and, more specifically the church of San Marco, functioned for him in a variety of capacities: as a point of departure, revisitation, hiatus; that is, it was a point of reference that repeatedly helped the painter to calibrate his own development as an image-maker. With each homecoming, traces of Pordenone's journeys found expression in the paintings he executed for the church (the high altarpiece marked his sixth contribution), transforming the sacred space into a repository of interactions: interactions the artist had with the creative production of his past and how that production responded to the art of Venice.[120]

By the early 1520s, Pordenone's *Misericordia Madonna* had become instrumental for local practices and expectations for altarpiece painting through imitators like Marcello Fogolino. Marcello's altarpieces for the church of San Marco and the nearby parish church at Brugnera attempt to perpetuate certain particularities such as the musculature and dress of Saint Christopher in his Brugnera altarpiece, the tight fitting sleeves of Pordenone's Virgin, and Pordenone's articulation of drapery in general (figures 52, 53, 54). Despite gender differences, the figure of Saint Daniel in Marcello's *Pala di San*

[120] Before he began work on the high altarpiece, Pordenone had painted the following works in the church of San Marco: *Madonna and Child standing on a Crescent Moon* (ca. 1504), *Saint Erasmus* (ca. 1514-1515), *Saint Roche* (ca. 1514-1515), the *Misericordia* altarpiece (1515-1516), and the four baptismal font scenes from the *Life of Saint John the Baptist* (ca. 1534). At some point after the Capuchin church of San Gottardo was destroyed in 1812, Pordenone's altarpiece of *Saint Gothard with Saints Sebastian and Roche* (1525-1526), which had been located on the high altar, was displayed in the church of San Marco before it was moved to the Town Hall in the later nineteenth century (now in the Museo Civico) (figure 51). Aside from the works made for the church of San Marco, the number of surviving paintings by the artist in neighboring towns reveals that the artist regularly returned to his native city throughout his career.

Francesco also appears to approximate the physiognomy of Pordenone's Virgin and the sweeping, asymmetrical landscape from which the figures are segregated is also similar (figure 52). The making of these works sanctioned the authority of Pordenone's altarpiece as a kind of "prime object," to use George Kubler's term, in the sense that it had become vital to local image-making and to the prestige of the church of San Marco, which operated as the leading religious institution of the city.[121] Conversely, the painting for the high altar does not seem to have inspired an immediate response from Pordenone's imitators. It was only toward the end of the century that an evident recollection can be found in Francesco Bassano's altarpiece of the *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Anthony Abbot in Glory with Nicholas Enthroned, the Archangel Michael, and George* for the Duomo of Sacile (1589-1590) (figure 55). Whether this was because the *pala* was difficult to see or simply too far outside the horizon of local expectation is difficult to ascertain. What is clear, however, is the lack of scholarly consensus about what the image actually represents.

This painting rather abruptly juxtaposes the heavenly apparition of the resurrected Christ in the upper register with the enthroned figure of Saint Mark (titular saint of the church) and a collection of locally-venerated saints below, including a warrior saint who has ridden into the interior setting of the altarpiece atop his horse.[122] In the absence of a

[121] For "prime object" see George Kubler, *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), pp. 35-48; and David Summers, "Arbitrariness and authority: how art makes cultures," in *Time and Place: the Geohistory of Art*, eds. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann and Elizabeth Pilliod (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 203-213. For the early history of the church of San Marco and its administration see Sante Bortolami, "Una chiesa, una città: le origini del duomo di Pordenone tra spirito civico e sentimento religioso," in *San Marco di Pordenone*, I, pp. 1-29; and Alberto Cassini, "Domus civica: cronache confideziali," Ibid., II, pp. 889-901.

[122] The equestrian saint is now typically identified as Saint George, titular saint of the second parish church of Pordenone. According to the notarial acts of Osvaldo Ravenna (ca. 1640-42) the standard that adorns the saint's lance displays one of the d'Alviano family's coats of arms. Cohen sees this as evidence for the altarpiece's civic character and Furlan suggests the possibility of the saint's resemblance to Livio Liviano,

surviving contract, the painting's peculiar iconography has led to varying descriptions of the represented action. Carlo Ridolfi described the painting as "…the Savior in a ray of glory, [with] Saint Mark sitting adorned against a column…consecrating a priest."[123] For Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, the "Glory of Saint Mark," as they called it, "represents the saint, attended by acolytes, reading the service from a book held by a bishop, whilst a youth awaiting consecration kneels at his feet…"[124] The discrepancy initiated by these two descriptions of Mark's activity has continued into the twentieth century, most recently with Caterina Furlan and Paolo Pastres on one side and Charles Cohen on the other. The former scholars rehearse Ridolfi's claim that Mark is performing the rite of ordination, while Cohen generalizes that the subordinate figures simply "assist" Mark, excluding reference to consecration.[125] As of yet, there has been no attempt to provide an explanation for Christ's appearance. The vagueness that characterizes the art historical reception of Pordenone's painting is strange for a number of reasons. An identifiable subject was a basic expectation and paintings that confused their subjects could fail to glorify the intended dedicatee and, by extension, the patron

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heir of Bartolomeo d'Alviano, who died in November 1537 when he was twenty-three years old. It is difficult to calibrate Pordenone's sentiments toward the ruling family of his native city. The painter had received commissions from the d'Alviano family in the past and just as he began work on the *pala* Livio had invested him with a mill. However, Pordenone also worked for members of the town's Imperial faction. If the banner records one of the d'Alviano family's armorial bearings, one wonders, given the testimony of Sebastiano Mantica quoted above, if a sardonic innuendo was intended by placing the lordly figure on horseback within the sacred interior that encloses the saints. For more see Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, II, p. 693; Furlan, "Per dar maggiore vaghezza et splendore alla chiesa," p. 256

[123] Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte,* I, p. 117: "*Poscia in altro tempo di pinte nell'Altar maggiore il Salvatore in un raggio di gloria, San Marco parato sendente à canto ad un colonna (dietro à cui passano altre colonne, che formano una prospettiva sostenendo un tavolato,) che consacra un Sacerdote…"*

[124] Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in North Italy,* III, p. 171. These authors also note the visionary character of the painting: "Above this scene hovers the form of the Redeemer carried by cherubs, sweeping through space like a passing vision," Ibid.

[125] Furlan, "Per dar maggiore vaghezza et splendore alla chiesa," p. 256; Idem, *Il Pordenone*, pp. 217-220; Gilberto Presacco, "Tra Aquileia e Venezia: Note per S. Marco," in *San Marco di Pordenone*, I, pp. 541-593 (p. 560); Paolo Pastres, "Quattrocento e Cinquecento," in *Arte in Friuli dal Quattrocento al Settecento*, ed. Paolo Pastres (Udine: Società filologica friulana, 2008), pp. 3-81 (p. 65); Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, pp. 358-361 and II, p. 690.

that commissioned the object and the church that housed it.[126] Pordenone's painting is substantially complete, which mitigates claims that would justify indeterminacy solely as a matter of physical condition. But rather than hastily attributing the picture's anomalies to poetic license, I would like to reexamine its scholarly reception: Is there a priest being consecrated or awaiting consecration? Which figure is he? Is Saint Mark reading the service? Or is he simply pointing to the written word of his own Gospel, attesting to its truth, while directing his attention to the figures below him?

In 1964 Pietro Cannata identified the figure to Mark's right as the first bishop of Aquileia, Saint Hermagoras, and the figure holding the crosier to the Evangelist's left as the bishop's deacon, Saint Fortunatus.[127] Cannata's identification of these figures has never been questioned, although it complicates matters instead of clarifying them. According to the *Passio* of Hermagoras and Fortunatus, of which two twelfth-century versions survive, Saint Peter sent Mark to preach in pagan Aquileia, where he converted the local populace. Among those who converted was Hermagoras, whom Mark later brought to Rome, where Peter consecrated him bishop of Aquileia. The same version of events appears in the Life of Mark in the *Golden Legend*, in the twelfth-century crypt frescoes of the former cathedral of Aquileia, as well as in the Cappella Zen and Cappella di San Pietro at the Basilica di San Marco in Venice (figures 56, 57, 58).[128] Alternatively,

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[126] See the discussion by Alexander Nagel and Lorenzo Pericolo, "Unresolved Images: An Introduction to Aporia as an Analytical Category in the Interpretation of Early Modern Art," in *Subject as Aporia*, pp. 1-15.

[127] Pietro Cannata, "Ermagora e Fortunato: Iconografia," in *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* (Rome: Città Nuova, 1965), V, cols. 13-21, esp. p. 14.

[128] De Voragine*, The Golden Legend,* I, pp. 242-248. For the *Passio* and the Aquileia frescoes see Thomas E. A. Dale, *Relics, Prayers, and Politics in Medieval Venetia: Romanesque Painting in the Crypt of Aquileia Cathedral* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 7-11, 22, 42-44, 51-52, 77, 99-100, 123, pl. II, fig. 62; see also Gabriella Brumat Dellasorte, "*Ermacora e Fortunato*," in *Santi e martiri nel Friuli e nella Venezia Giulia,* ed. Walter Arzaretti (Padua: Edizioni Messaggero, 2001), pp. 29-32. For more on the mosaics at San Marco see Silvio Tramontin, "I santi dei mosaici marciani," in *Culto dei Santi a*

an eighth-century textual tradition claims that Mark ordained Hermagoras.[129] At first glance, Pordenone's altarpiece seems to sustain the confusion initiated by these competing hagiographies through its lack of formal clarity and the absence of iconographic elements typical of such scenes. Ordination is customarily signified by a gesture of blessing or a conferral of the pastoral staff as seen in Serafino Serafini's *Consecration of Saint Louis of Toulouse* (after 1375) at the church of San Francesco, Mantua, and in Pellegrino da San Daniele's organ shutters of 1521 for the Cathedral of Udine (figures 59 and 60).[130] Strangely, the absence of such conventional motifs and actions has not led scholars, perhaps with the exception of Cohen, to question Ridolfi's description. There is no explicit act of consecration being performed in the altarpiece, yet rather than challenge the force of tradition scholars have adopted Ridolfi's reading as evidence for claiming that the *pala* promoted Venice's right to elect its own bishops in protest to Roman authority or as important testimony for the vitality of a regional tradition that celebrated Mark as the evangelizer of Aquileia.[131]

Venezia, ed. Silvio Tramontin et al. (Venezia: Edizioni Studium Cattalico Veneziano, 1965), pp. 133-153 (pp. 144-145, 149). Basic iconographic information can be found in George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art,* 4 vols. (Florence: Sansoni, 1978), III, pp. 405/406-415/416.

[129] Pio Paschini, "Ermagora e Fortunato," in *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, V, cols. 10-13.

[130] As with the preceding examples, Pellegrino's organ shutters represent Saint Peter consecrating Hermagoras with Mark as the latter's advocate. The shutters were well known to Pordenone for he provided the seven parapet scenes for the organ in 1527. These parapet scenes depict the life of Saints Hermagoras and Fortunatus. For more on these paintings see Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, II, pp. 618-619. Pellegrino had previously painted Peter consecrating Hermagoras in a predella panel for the polyptych of the Cathedral of Aquileia (1502-03). The question of whether there were competing visual traditions (with an underlying political agenda) for Hermagoras' ordination in the Friuli is probably unwarranted.

[131] The claim that Mark converted the citizens Aquileia was routinely cited to prove that the Patriarchate of Aquileia originated during the apostolic era (despite the lack of documentary and archaeological evidence to support Mark's alleged mission to northeast Italy). During the fifteenth century the Patriarch of Aquileia was subjugated to Venetian control and the legend of Mark's mission was employed to bolster the antiquity of the Church of Venice and its expansionist agenda of episcopal jurisdiction. See Presacco, "Tra Aquileia e Venezia: note per S. Marco," pp. 560-561; Maria Calì, "Patroni, committenti, amici del Pordenone fra religione e storia," p. 100.

Apart from relying on a description that bears no visual confirmation, the first and more overtly political of these claims assumes that by 1535 the ecclesiastical congregation of the church of San Marco at Pordenone was a passive extension of the archdiocese of Venice and that the *pala* was intended as propaganda for the Venetian patriciate's political agenda. This assumption has no demonstrable basis, for while the defeat of the Venetian forces at the battle of Agnadello had enabled Julius II to impose a capitulation that demanded the Senate's renunciation of the right to elect bishops (a privilege it had enjoyed since at least the fourteenth century), Venice maintained jurisdiction over almost all of the bishoprics and chief benefices of the *terraferma*, including the diocese of Concordia.[132] While nostalgia for this custom may have continued in some of the Republic's long-held possessions such as Treviso, there is no evidence to suggest that such lingering regrets found expression in Pordenone.[133]

[132] For the capitulation see Emilio Friedberg and Francesco Ruffini, *Trattato di diritto ecclesiastico cattolico ed evangelico* (Turin: Fratelli Bocca, 1893), p. 100; Federico Seneca, *Venezia e papa Giulio II* (Padua: Liviana, 1962), p. 146; Paolo Prodi, "Structure and Organization of the Church in Renaissance Venice: Suggestions for Research," in *Renaissance Venice*, ed. John R. Hale (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), pp. 409-430; and Kenneth M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571),* vol. 3: The Sixteenth Century to the reign of Julius III (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1984), p. 78. In 1533 Cardinal Marino Grimani, a Venetian nobleman, took possession of the bishopric of Concordia, which he held jointly with Cardinal Francesco Corner until April 1537. The *episcopalis sedes* of the diocese was not located in Pordenone at this time, but in the town of Portogruaro. However, Grimani, who possessed several bishoprics, did not reside in Portogruaro. The vicars of the church of San Marco at Pordenone were local Pordenonese clerics and elected by the city's *Consiglio comunale*: pre Francesco Michielin (vicar from 1515-1559) and pre Giovanni Mauro Popaite (vicar from 1523-1558), the latter being a member of the local nobility. For Michielin and Popaite see Begotti, "Il clero: congregazione dei sacerdoti, vicari, altaristi," p. 636. For Grimani see Giampiero Brunelli, "Grimani, Marino," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 78 vols. (Roma : Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 2002), LIX, pp. 640-646.

[133] Paolo Prodi has suggested that such nostalgia can be found in a deliberation over the bishopric of Treviso from 17 August 1527: "Anciently it was the custom of our most wise ancestors to nominate the bishops of our cities and territories in our Senate and then to seek confirmation for this nomination from the pope; a thing certainly done with great consideration as we can see from the fact that the worthy quality of the pastors nominated produced excellent and exemplary behavior among both clerics and laity, with not only the conservation of ecclesiastical properties but also their increase. And this praiseworthy custom endured until the time of Pope Julius…" Sanuto, *I diarii…*, XVL, col. 623-624, translated in Prodi, "Structure and Organization of the Church in Renaissance Venice," p. 418.

Another shortcoming of this presumption is its inattention to local concerns and the participation of lay parishioners in the object's commission, which was extensive: payment for the altarpiece was not the responsibility of a single patron, but a commitment shared by the congregation. The Archivio Parrocchiale di San Marco preserves an account book that includes a list of pledges and donations specifically for the *pala* of the high altar, many of which came from members of the artisan classes.[134] As a shared financial endeavor, the altarpiece should be understood as an expression of the local congregation's collective identity and ambitions and not as a vehicle of the *città dominante* for spreading hostility against Rome.[135] The representation of Christ miraculously appearing to a collection of locally-venerated saints may have simply been intended to stress the point that those saints to whom the native population was most indebted share a unique relation to Christ and, by extension, so did they.[136] As such, the *pala* reaffirms local belief in the importance of the cult of saints for the well-being of the parish, an issue increasingly contested by reformers north of the Alps.

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[134] Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, II, pp. 690-691; Paolo Goi, "Documenti," in Furlan, *Il Pordenone* (1988), pp. 354-367 (p. 363)

[135] There does not appear to be any direct evidence of the ruling family's participation in or influence over the commission. Following the death of Bartolomeo d'Alviano, his wife Pantasilea ruled in his stead until 1529 when their son, Livio Liviano, came of age. Pantasilea had resided in Pordenone since 22 October 1517, but by 1530 she had returned to Alviano. Livio, having adopted his father's occupation, was in the pay of the French and rarely in Pordenone. Despite the frequent absence of Livio from the city while the artist was working on the *pala*, we should not exclude all possibility of his impact. While away from the city, Livio placed its governance in the hands of his captains and reinstated the office of the *podestà*, which was held in 1534 by Ermolao de Franceschinis. The name Ermolao does not bear an onomastic connection to Saint Ermacora (Hermagoras). For the period of Livio's rule see Benedetti, *Storia di Pordenone*, pp. 163-179. For the *podestà* of Pordenone see Benedetti, "Mansioni e prerogative dei podestà di Pordenone secondo gli antichi statute," *Il Noncello*, n. 11 (1958), pp. 85-92.

[136] For the local popularity of these saints see Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 358 and II, pp. 690-3; and Furlan, "Per dar maggiore vaghezza et splendore alla chiesa," p. 256. The names of these saints appear among many of the benefices and altar dedications of the church of San Marco as well as the feasts celebrated there in the early modern period, see appendices II, III, IV in Begotti, "Il clero: congregazione dei sacerdoti, vicari, altaristi," pp. 641-645.

The second proposition advanced by proponents of Ridolfi – that the altarpiece advocates a tradition that commemorates Mark as the evangelizer of the provinces of Venetia and Istria – is far more pertinent for a *pordenonese* audience, but one that need not depend on the act of consecration. With his face turned to Hermagoras, Mark presses his fingers against the page of a codex (presumably the Gospel he penned in Aquileia), drawing the attention of the bishop, his deacon, and others to the written Word.[137] Through this act of evangelization, the efficacy of which is recorded on the adoring faces of adjacent saints, Mark performs his identity as the point of origin for the local dissemination of the *Logos*.

Amid the tumultuous array of holy figures, Mark's exposition of the written Word is aligned with the central axis and placed above the adjoining figures (with the exception of Saint George) so that his actions intervene between the saints below and Christ above. In other words, Mark's position suggests that he occupies an intermediary place within the saints' shared vision of the resurrected Christ. But how should we understand the association or disassociation of these two events? Unlike the *Misericordia* altarpiece, the competing compositional foci of the *San Marco* altarpiece do not attempt to activate a kind of devout perplexity through the repetition of identical forms, as with the twin Christ children mentioned earlier. Instead, I propose that the coupling of these two events –

[137] On 24 June 1420 the supposedly autograph Gospel of Mark was transported to the treasury of the Basilica di San Marco in Venice. However, a quire of pages was missing for the Patriarch Nicola of Aquileia, a member of the Luxemburg dynasty, had given a portion of the manuscript to his half-brother, Emperor Charles IV. See Vincenzo Joppi, "Le sacre reliquie della chiesa patriarcale d'Aquileia. Memorie e documenti," in *Archivio Storico per Trieste, l'Istria e il Trentino*, 4 vols. (Rome: Forzani, 1881-89), III, pp. 195-223 (pp. 208-209); and John E. Law, "Venice and the Problem of Sovereignty in the Patria del Friuli, 1421," in *Florence and Italy: Renaissance Studies in Honour of Nicolai Rubenstein*, eds. Peter Denley and Caroline Elam (London: Westfield College, University of London, 1988); reprinted in *Venice and the Veneto in the Early Renaissance*, Variorum Collected Studies Series (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2000), pp.135-147, esp. pp. 138-143.

Mark's attestation and Christ's appearance – operates reciprocally to clarify the necessity of both text and image in the service of Catholic ritual.

In 1533 the coupling of a *sacra conversazione* containing an enthroned bishop saint with the vision of Christ's resurrected body was unusual, particularly in northeast Italy.[138] When painters did juxtapose a heavenly host in the upper register with a collection of earth-bound characters in the lower register of an altarpiece, the organization was typically motivated by visionary exigencies.[139] Alternatively, a different, non-narrative tradition of representing holy personages "in glory" often included accompanying saints to reinforce the idea of a chain of intercession, or provide the viewer with figures on which to model his or her experience. Pordenone himself had

[138] By itself, the *sacra conversazione* that featured an enthroned bishop saint with codex was a common type in early sixteenth-century Friuli and Venice. Pordenone had previously experimented with it in the *San Gottardo* altarpiece (figure 51). This altarpiece – with the enthroned bishop pointing to an open codex on his lap, the columned portico, and the music-making angels – provides several points of comparison with the *San Marco* altarpiece. See Cohen, *The Art Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, pp. 239-241, II, pp. 605-608. Many of the basic elements of the *pala* for the high altar of San Marco are analogous to those found in the altarpieces of *Saint Mark Enthroned* by Giovanni Martini (Udine, Duomo), Bonifacio de' Pitati (Corbolone, Parrocchiale), and Titian (Venice, Santa Maria della Salute), as well as in Sebastiano del Piombo's *San Giovanni Chrisotomo* altarpiece (Venice, San Giovanni Christomo) and Palma Vecchio's *Saint Peter Enthroned* (Venice, Accademia). Among these examples, the last two provide particularly important precedents for Pordenone's *San Marco* altarpiece, but in different respects. Sebastiano's altarpiece (1509-10) (figure 61) shows an enthroned saint against a column, but he also introduced a more discursive, informal space into this type of composition that admits an anecdotal undertone, such as that played out between the Baptist and Chrysostom. Pordenone similarly mitigates the inertia of iconic focus by having Mark engage the adjoining saints with the exposition of his text and further activates the space by overlapping this interaction with the additional one between Christ and the attendant saints. Palma's altarpiece (1522-24) (figure 62), originally from the church of Fontanelle near Oderzo, also acknowledges Sebastiano's, but its importance for Pordenone lies in the correspondence it articulates between two signs for the same referent. Without compromising Saint Peter's preeminence within the composition, Palma utilizes the pointing gestures of Peter and the Baptist to draw the viewer's attention to the codex on the lap of the enthroned saint and the lamb at the base of his throne. In doing so, Palma's altarpiece makes a visual analogy between lamb and *Logos*. Pordenone's altarpiece draws a similar comparison between Mark's written text and Christ's corporeal image, but as I will elaborate, the importance of these media is also conveyed in terms of the effects they have on the cast of figures. For Sebastiano's altarpiece see David Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice: Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 31 and 38; and Cole, *Titian and Venetian painting,* pp. 59-61. Pordenone had painted Saint Mark before: in 1524 he received payment for a representation of the saint painted on the doors of the church of Santa Maria in Spilimbergo, although no record of its appearance survives. See Di Maniago, *Storia delle belle arti friulane,* I, Doc. XLI, p. 234.

[139] It is worth mentioning that the kinds of visionary painting pioneered by Raphael, Titian, and Giovanni Battista Moroni was still in its infancy and would only later become normative in the Veneto with the works of Paolo and Carlo Caliari, Jacopo dal Ponte, Jacopo Robusti, and others.

frescoed a *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints Agnes, Catherine, and God the Father in Glory* (ca. 1524-1527) at the church of Sant'Agnese, Rorai Piccolo (figure 63).[140]

The *San Marco* altarpiece presents two separate events to the beholder, but they are not two parts of the same historical narrative. Rather the painting offers a strange combination of historicizing and timeless elements: Mark interacts with his contemporary followers within an atemporal collective of biblical and early Christian saints who witness and respond to Christ's miraculous appearance. A similar combination of compositional elements and motifs can be found in one of Titian's most celebrated paintings; namely, the *Pesaro Madonna* (1519-26) (figure 66).

While the morphology and demeanor of Titian's figures bears little resemblance to that of Pordenone's, the two paintings share a surprising number of components: both feature a holy personage enthroned against a colossal column with venerating saints; both include a bearded saint seated with an open book across his lap to which he points as he looks down toward a supplicating bishop on his right; both contain an armored figure bearing a standard; and in both floats a jet of clouds with accompanying *putti* and a reference to the divine accomplishment of man's salvation at the apex of the picture (figures 50 and 66). Among these elements, Titian's reference to atonement – represented by the cross elevated by two angels – can help account for Pordenone's competing

[140] In some cases, the glorified figure appears to have been absorbed from the *cimasa* into the principal picture field while recalling traditional spatial divisions, such as the barrier of clouds that divides Lorenzo Luzzo's *Madonna and Child with Saints Vito and Modesto and the Redeemer in Glory* (1510s), once at the parish church of Caupo a Seren del Grappa (now Venice, Accademia) or the veil held by angels in Carpaccio's *Saint Thomas enthroned with Saints Mark and Louis of Toulouse* (1507) once at the church of San Pietro Martire, Murano (now Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie) (figures 64 and 65). The amalgamation of imagery typically allocated to separate picture fields is suggestive of what in Pordenone's earlier works often appears to be on the verge of happening. At several points in his career, Pordenone decorated domes and apses with images of God the Father that illusionistically tumble into the sacred space of the church and threaten to collide with the scene above the altar. In such instances, Cohen has argued that the artist designed his works to interact with the altar paintings visually and iconographically to create a cross-spatial ensemble of cumulative effect. Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 53.

compositional foci. Past scholarship has explained Titian's cross in relation to the child below; that is, as a proleptic device that foreshadows Christ's Passion, as a symbol of his vulnerable humanity, and, consequently, as expressive of Franciscan piety in particular.[141] When child and cross are read together, the incarnation of the flesh and the sign of Christ's sacrifice iterate the inception and consummation of man's redemption and, by extension, allude to the redemptive value of the rites enacted upon the altar below. The kind of inferential logic that underlies the relationship between cross, child, and ritual can help to explain how the compositional foci of Pordenone's painting interrelate.

Mark's gospel preaches the miracle of Christ's resurrection, which is visualized in Pordenone's painting above its textual exposition and as the adjoining figures' visionary experience.[142] If one occurrence infers the other, the juxtaposition of these two events could be read as a kind of pictorial *demonstratio evangelica* in that the enthroned saint sets forth the truth of the Word that is substantiated by the corporeal theophany overhead and confirmed by the reactions of the onlookers. When read in relation to the sacred rites performed during the liturgy, the compositional foci confirm for parishioners that Christ is made corporeally present in and through the operation of scripture and the service of the Eucharist. The synchronous nature of pictorial representation suggests that the inference need not be unidirectional, but mutually reinforcing. In their simultaneity, the

[141] See, for example, Staale Sinding-Larsen, "La pala dei Pesaro e la tradizione dell'immagine liturgica," in *Tiziano e Venezia, convegno internazionale di studi, Venezia 1976* (Vicenza: N. Pozza, 1980), pp. 201-206; and Rona Goffen, *Piety and Patronage in Renaissance Venice: Bellini, Titian and the Franciscans* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 110-115.

[142] As Victor Stoichita has noted, visionary experience is not necessarily an optical one. While all of Pordenone's figures appear as though inspired by divine furor with their windblown hair and theatrical poses, not all of them experience Christ by means of corporeal sight. I wonder if Pordenone, in proposing the equivalency of text and image (in terms of how man comes to know God) is playing upon notions of internal and external perception. For more on vision painting see Victor I. Stoichita, *Visionary Experience in the Golden Age of Spanish Painting* (London: Reaktion Books, 1995).

compositional foci operate reciprocally to insist upon the necessary connection or non-figural resemblance between the corporeal image of Christ and the written abstraction of the *Logos*. In doing so, Pordenone's composition stresses the importance of the two media through which God reveals himself to man.[143]

The reciprocity of word and image is further attested by the profound effect that both have on the accompanying figures, whose reactions vary from the Baptist's flustered astonishment to Hermagoras' submissive adoration. The arrangement of the figures is also carefully engineered to intimate their commensurability, for Mark and his gospel occupy an intermediary position between Christ and the saints below, intercepting several of the saints' lines of sight. As a result, the possibility of determining whether some saints are responding to Christ or to the words of Mark's gospel is compromised.[144] During those decades in which northern reformers were attacking the mediating agency of images in the service of devotion, Pordenone's *San Marco* altarpiece insists upon the equivalency of text and image precisely *as* mediators.[145]

Rather than attempt to locate the divine within the realm of everyday experience as he had in the *Misericordia* altarpiece or obscure the image's referential status in a bid to offer "the thing itself," Pordenone's painting offers a theophanic eruption by means that are conspicuously artificial. Given the unfinished state of the painting, observations

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[143] One might also add here that the painting stresses the intermediary role of the saints, for they act as filters through which the divine is revealed to the devout beholder.

[144] This is unlike Titian's painting, for no one within the composition acknowledges the cross, the visible symbol of Christ's sacrifice. In Pordenone painting, the living symbol of man's redemption is determinative for the composition because it functions as a catalyst for generating the saints' reactions. Titian's cross operates more directly in relation to the viewer as a cue to figurative import.

[145] Martin Luther had attacked the use of images as supporting a theology of good works in 1520 with the tract *Von den guten Werke*n (On Good Works). However, his opinion shifted over time and by 1525 Luther recommended images for books, homes, and churches as an aid to memory and understanding. See *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesammtausgabe* (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau, 1888), Abt. 1, Bd. 6, pp. 196-276 (p. 211); and *Treatise on Good Works: Luther Study Edition*, trans. and intro. Scott Hendrix (Lanham: Fortress Press, 2012), pp. 28-30, 33.

regarding the character of form and surface are necessarily provisional, but what survives suggests that the artist wished the beholder to notice the mediating agency of the painter as much as the represented spectacle. The elongated proportions of the figures, the affected delicacy with which they assume stilted poses, and the lack of clear figure placement call attention to the painting's status as the product of an individual artist's *maniera* and *fantasia.* This impression is sustained by formal tensions such as the way in which the lance of Saint George runs parallel to the picture plane as well as back into space to rest on his arm, or the strange combination of difficult flexure and supreme serenity that characterizes the male nude in the right foreground. Presumably Saint Sebastian, the absence of arrows and fetters does not problematize this figure's identity so much as emphasize his status as a testing ground for capturing the sensuality of human flesh.[146] The significance of this figure as a display of artistic prowess acquires additional purchase when one realizes that his pose is the mirror-image of Christ's.[147] The resemblance between these two figures raises questions about artistic and theological

[146] Such a figure, on account of his difficult pose and display of anatomy, seems to satisfy what Paolo Pino would later recommend in his *Dialogo di pittura*: "*…e in tutte l'opere vostre fateli intervenire almeno una figura tutta sforciata, misteriosa e difficile, acciò che per quella voi state notato valente da chi intenda la perfezzion dell'arte*," from, *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento, fra Mannerismo e Controriforma*, I, p. 115. That such a figure could have been appreciated for its secular merits despite its location within a religious context is suggested by Jacopo Tebaldi's bid to acquire Titian's *Saint Sebastian* canvas from the *Averoldi* polyptych for Alfonso d'Este in 1520. For the attempted transaction see David Rosand, "Titian's Saint Sebastians," *Artibus et Historiae*, n. 30 (1994), pp. 23-39 (pp. 27-29). Alternatively, the absence of a saint's identifiable attributes was ridiculed by Giovanni Andrea Gilio, who believed such omissions were symptoms of artistic vanity: "*O vanità del huomo in far vano quello che è vero e proprio e principale, per dar luogo a le fintioni che non pesano una paglia! Se l'arte è scimia de la natura, perché non deve in questo imitarla? [...] Veggo Stefano lapidato senza pietre, Biagio intiero e bello, nel eculeo senza sangue, Giacopo Apostolo senza pertiche in capo, Sebastiano senza frezze [frecce], Lorenzo ne la graticola non arso et incotto, ma bianco, non per altro che l'arte nol comporta e per mostrare i muscoli e vene. O vanità vana, o errore senza fine, stimar più quello che nulla opera che quello che dà la forma e la perfettione a le figure e che solo merita esser veduto e contemplato, con pretesto che la pittura nol richiede*," from the *Due dialogi* (1564), reproduced by Sonia Maffei, "La fama di Laocoonte nei testi del Cinquencento," in Salvatore Settis, *Laocoonte, fama e stile* (Rome: Donzelli, 1999), pp. 85-230 (p. 192).

[147] In some ways Sebastian also plays the role of what Stoichita calls the "absent witness" or a figure standing in the painting but not actually seeing the vision optically. Rather, Sebastian's internal "vision" of Christ is embodied externally via his pose. Stoichita, *Visionary Experience*, p. 96.

conceptions of "likeness," which find their impetus in the suggestion that the animation of the holy figures is generated through painterly skill as much as through the presence of the divine (a topic I will return to in the third chapter). In fact, the roughed-out shapes, unblended brushstrokes, and unresolved spatial tensions draw attention not simply to the illusion as illusion, but to the material processes through which divine truth is alluded to.

The experimental nature of the *San Marco* altarpiece is signaled not only by the unusual *concetto* it visualizes but by the character of its figural style, which departs from that of the painter's own style as well as from his local and Venetian peers. Pordenone worked on several commissions concurrent with the *San Marco pala*, including altarpieces for the towns of Cividale and San Daniele del Friuli (figures 67 and 68). The robust physiognomic types, simplified poses, and ample proportions of the figures that occupy these paintings accentuate the difference in formal language expressed in the *San Marco* altarpiece, which acknowledges the artist's familiarity with the lightness and refinement of the works of Parmigianino and Perino del Vaga.[148] In the early 1530s Pordenone interrupted his work at the church of Santa Maria di Campagna at Piacenza to join Perino in the creation of a four-part cycle of the story of Jason for the garden façade of Prince Andrea Doria's palace in Genoa (now destroyed).[149] The strange combination

[148] Sergio Bettini was the first to note the appropriation of a Parmigianesque component. Idem, "La pittura friulana del rinascimento e Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone," *Le Arti: rassegna bimestrale dell'arte antica e moderna*, anno 1, fasc. 5 (June-July 1939), pp. 464-480 (p. 480). Cohen and Furlan have noted the influence of Perino. See Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 360 and II, p. 692; and Furlan, *Il Pordenone* (1988), p. 219.

[149] Pordenone's interaction with the works of Correggio and Parmigianino will be discussed in chapter three. Pordenone's fresco of *Pelais counseling Jason to go in search of the Golden Fleece* (destroyed, but probably painted between 1532-33) was the first scene in the cycle at Genoa. For more see Piero Boccardo, "L'episodio Genovese del Pordenone all'interno di una nuova proposta cronologica per la decorazione di palazzo Doria," in *Il Pordenone. Atti del convegno internazionale di studio,* pp. 165-169; Stefano Pierguidi, "Perin del Vaga *versus* Pordenone, Beccafumi e Girolamo da Treviso nella decorazione delle facciate della villa di Andrea Doria a Genova," *Arte documento*, v. 26 (2010), pp. 166-175; and Marco Campigli, "Girolamo da Treviso, Perin del Vaga, Pordenone e Beccafumi. Quattro artisti per un ciclo di affreschi genovese," *Nuovi studi*, v. 17 (2011), pp. 37-50.

of fluid elegance, delicacy of comportment, and showy histrionics that distinguish the figures of the *San Marco* altarpiece as well as those of Perino's other works in Genoa, such as the *Fall of the Giants* (ca. 1530-1533), reflects Pordenone's engagement with formal qualities encountered during his peregrinations in north-west Italy (figure 69). The breadth of imitative reference available to the artist and the specificity with which he administered the resources of style indicate the deliberative nature of this particular performance of his artistic identity. The *San Marco* altarpiece selectively maps certain values associated with a language of artificial *disinvoltura* (ease) and epic narrative (developed in Rome and favored by aristocratic patrons in Liguria and Emilia) onto the compositional armature of one of Titian's most innovative altarpieces.[150] In departing from his past artistic self, or rather from that self best-known to the local populace through the *Misericordia* altarpiece and its filtration through Marcello Fogolino's works, Pordenone introduced his Friulian audience to a "nonlocal" or artistically "foreign" conception of human form and drama to reassert his own local preeminence and contest the authority of Venetian art as the guarantee of modern taste. In doing so, this altarpiece offered the church of San Marco a level of cultural sophistication and material ostentation unattained by other churches in the city or diocese.

Against Mid-Century Norms

On a formal level, the new orientation in the artist's representational mode marks a striking departure from his earlier work for the church of San Marco.[151] However, when

[150] *Disinvoltura* shares connotations with *sprezzatura* as a component of *grazia,* but is more specifically associated with physical movement. See Castiglione, *Il cortegiano*, bk. 1, XXVI, pp. 74-76.

[151] Apart from the *Misericordia* and *San Gottardo* altarpieces, the only other altarpiece by Pordenone in his native city was the *Madonna and Child with Saints Roche, Sebastian, and Francis* (lost) for the church of San Giuliano. Pordenone had executed frescoes in the churches of San Marco, San Gottardo, and Santa Lucia, but only those in San Marco survive. The difference in figural style between these works and the *San Marco* altarpiece could have elicited effects suggestive of what Roberto Longhi called the "meteorite."

read as a concerted effort to resist marginality, the *San Marco* altarpiece continues the dissentious precedent set by the *Misericordia Madonna*.[152] Both paintings participate in a pictorial discourse that sounds out the problem of conveying the truth of the Gospel alongside a polemic of self-promotion. When taken together, the altarpieces index an interrelation of artistic mobility, imitation, and resistance that calls into question the usefulness of such designations as "provincial" or "peripheral" and the reifying of cultural hierarchies. The range of imitative reference and transgressive tactics that underlie these altarpieces do not connote cultural backwardness or delayed artistic taste, nor do they bear the mark of self-exclusion. Instead, Pordenone's responses to the art of Titian reveal an awareness of diverse stylistic registers and their oppositional potential.[153] Indeed, Titian's paintings did not exert an inhibiting force on the artist's experimentation, but contributed to its enabling conditions. Pordenone's altarpieces for the church of San Marco serve to articulate an alternative position that constitutes an implicit challenge to the artistic hegemony of Venice.[154]

In addition, the importation and manipulation of nonlocal artistic values in the *San Marco* altarpiece complicates art historical preoccupations with correlating styles to

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See Robert Longhi, "Lettera pittorica a Giuseppe Fioco," in *Edizione delle opere complete di Roberto Longhi* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1967), vol. 1, tomo 1, pp. 77-98 (p. 85). Other, albeit lost, works that might have contributed to Pordenone's local recognizability are the façade frescoes of the Rorario, Mantica, and possibly Varaschini palaces, which were almost certainly done by followers. See Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, II, pp. 741-743.

[152] In this regard, the romantic idea that Pordenone actively sought the honor of knighthood to appear on equal footing with Titian should not be dismissed forthwith. Pordenone's elevation to nobility by King John Zápolya of Hungary (for whom he never worked) was brought about through the machinations of the artist's friend and fellow pordenonese, Girolamo Rorario, papal *nuncio* to the court of Hungary. What is interesting here is the temporal alignment of Pordenone's aspirations to nobility with the adoption of a style of figuration popular among aristocratic patrons. He was knighted on 24 April 1535. The diploma was published by Di Maniago, *Storia delle belle arti friulane,* I, Doc. LIV, pp. 238-240.

[153] By contrast, Cohen believes that Pordenone's desire to satisfy his patrons outweighs concerns about self-presentation or devotional efficacy. Idem, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone* I, pp. 311 and 330.

[154] Castelnuovo and Ginzburg, "Symbolic Domination and Artistic Geography in Italian Art History," pp. 25-32.

specific geographical areas. The adaptation of artistic qualities drawn from his own works, as well as from the works of Titian and Perino, forestalls the association of Pordenone's *San Marco* altarpiece with the style of a single place: to interpret it as the translation of a Raphaelesque *maniera* to the Friuli or as the duplication of a Venetian compositional type is to miss the point. Rather, it stages a dialectical relation between pictorial modes that illustrates a geographical awareness about artistic creation and a willingness to exploit diverse artistic values to assert his primacy without the pressures of belonging to one of Italy's leading artistic "clubs" or schools.[155] As a result, the *San Marco* altarpiece does not sit well with the regionally-based taxonomies of style that will dominate art theoretical writing from Pino, Vasari, and Dolce onward. In exploring the topicality of tempered language and contaminate imitation, this chapter marks an initial step toward rethinking how the variation of artistic exchange can be characterized in northeastern Italy before the mid-sixteenth century. As I will elaborate in the following chapters, the particular forms of contaminate imitation that underlie Pordenone's experiments can be seen in confrontation with the centralization of Italy's artistic cultures around the cities of Florence, Venice, and Rome. As such, they underscore the artistic polycentricity of early sixteenth-century Italy. Working in the Friulian frontier Pordenone was an insider with outsider knowledge, selectively adapting and discarding local traditions and Venetian modernisms to create variations of a critically self-aware and trans-regional *maniera.* The following chapters will explore how Pordenone's status as an outsider in Cremona and Piacenza affected his local "marketability."

[155] For the likening of Italy's artistic centers to clubs with their own criteria and rules of competition see Castelnuovo and Ginzburg, "Centro e periferia," p. 300.

The altarpieces Pordenone painted for the church of San Marco are also important for what they reveal about the changing conditions of altarpiece-making in the early sixteenth century and the kinds of interactions they presuppose. The appeal to everyday appearances in the *Misericordia Madonna* can be seen as a response to a desire for an intimate engagement with Christ's humanity and the saints, a desire the artist manipulated to incite reflection on the mystery of Christ's divinity. The duplicated Christ child upsets the coherence of naturalistic painting to encourage an interaction that is clearly directed toward the implications of Eucharistic presence. At the same time, its inclusion can also be read as an attempt to access and maintain the authority of a traditional image-type. The same concern extends to the diminutive supplicants, who may be said to preserve a traditional Friulian view regarding man's subservient relation to and distance from the divine. The *San Marco* altarpiece, by contrast, engages with a specific, "modern" work of art and employs a nonlocal mode of idealized form to reinforce an awareness of art's mediating status and configure the reciprocal validation of word and image for the transmission of grace. The unfamiliar pictorial language invited new ways of thinking about the role of religious painting that had developed in other parts of the peninsula, but its subject matter reinstates a local tradition of celebrating Saint Mark as the evangelizer of Aquileia.

By invoking particular traditions of the image and diverse artistic authorities, Pordenone's paintings, like those of most historically-minded artists, register a process of self-analysis in which the reliability and efficacy of different modes of Christian image-making are brought into contact and compared.[156] However, the particular sensibilities to

[156] According to Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, p. 235, around 1500 concerns over the reliability of visual evidence was supposedly manifested in the way Christian images were "performing

which these altarpieces appeal reflect a historical context in which the boundaries of belief and the status of religious images were far from clear and rapidly changing. During a period in which there was no prescriptive theory of religious art, these altarpieces chart the extent to which Pordenone pushed the representational possibilities of this type of painting as both a means of asserting his artistic distinctiveness and as a vehicle for stimulating piety and communicating sacred truth.

internal examinations of their own temporal interlacings." However, as noted in the Introduction to this study, I am not convinced that such examinations were conducted in preparation for the "brutal dismantlings and displacements that would occur in the Protestant Reformation."

CHAPTER 2

VIOLENT SPACES AND SPATIAL VIOLENCE AT CREMONA CATHEDRAL

The violence enacted upon Christ in Pordenone's paintings of the Passion at Cremona cathedral (1520-1522) is of such ferocious intensity that it cannot be contained by the frame. In the *Fall on the Way to Calvary*, Christ appears to reach out beyond the represented world to grip the picture's edge, bracing himself against the torments of his oppressors (figure 71). In the scene of *Christ Nailed to the Cross*, the shaft of the cross projects out of the picture plane in an illusionistic overflowing of sacred history into the space of the church (figure 72). Such transgressions of contained pictorial space also destabilize time: they underscore the idea of Christ's Passion as a perpetual event; that is, Jesus not only suffered for the redemption of man, but continues to do so in the present.[1] The collapse of temporal logic that these paintings allege makes explicit an essential component of all Christian imagery: in visualizing a timeless truth, paintings like Pordenone's offer the potential for a pictorial dialogue in which the distinction between sacred past and devotional present is elided. But the violence the artist employs to motivate the time-bending agency of these images also affects the beholder's perception of illusionistic space and his or her relation to it.[2] Pordenone's Cremona frescoes are often seen solely in terms of artistic pyrotechnics, but they also reflect a concern with the nature of sacred representation at a time when the stakes for being a maker of Christian images were growing

[1] For more on the idea of Christ's continual suffering see Merback, "Recognitions: Theme and Metatheme in Hans Burgkmair the Elder's *Santa Croce in Gerusalemme* of 1504," p. 304f; and Richard Kieckhefer, *Unquiet souls: Fourteenth-Century Saints and their Religious Milieu* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1984), p. 111.

[2] For the time-bending agency or "plural temporality" of early modern artworks see Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, esp. pp. 7-19.

increasingly higher.[3] The violent force with which Pordenone's projective forms transgress the picture frames calls into question traditional assumptions regarding the relation of image and beholder. In this chapter, I will consider how the artist's intrusive illusions affect the exigencies of beholding, the concerns they raise about the potential of art to transcend distinctions between fiction and reality, and what those concerns might mean for the role of Pordenone's art within the context of Cremona cathedral and in relation to local artistic practices.

To paint the suffering and shameful execution of the God-made-man is to undertake the difficult task of visualizing an image of inversion. Embracing the seemingly incongruous link between holiness and disfigurement, northern European Passion imagery often presented a challenge to the devout beholder's conviction in Christ's divinity by confronting him or her with revolting images of Jesus' suffering. Pordenone's frescoes present the beholder with a similar test of faith, albeit within an Italian pictorial matrix, and one that intensifies the challenge to see beyond Christ's debased appearance by compounding it with an optically-confounding assault on the beholder.[4] This is to say that in Pordenone's paintings the manipulation of the viewer's awareness of the boundary between art and reality operates as a powerful means of soliciting reflection on Christ's Passion and its representability. Such means

[3] Scholarship that attempts to define Pordenone's artistic singularity at Cremona includes: Hanne Kolind Poulsen, "Obtrusive Paintings. Pordenone and the Baroque Tendencies in Italian Art at the Beginning of the 16th Century," in *Images of Cult and Devotion: Function and Reception of Christian Images of Medieval and Post-Medieval Europe*, ed. Søren Kaspersen (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2004), pp. 265-272; Idem, "Mode and Meaning: the Frescoes of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone in the Cathedral of Cremona," *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici*, v. 29 (2003), pp. 119-153; Carolyn Smyth, "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes in Cremona Cathedral: an Incitement to Piety," pp. 101-128; Andrea C. Theil, *Il Pordenone. Studien zu seiner Bildsprache* (Worms: Wernersche Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000), pp. 14-107; Claudia Bertling Biaggini, *Il Pordenone. Pictor Modernus: zum Umgang mit Bildrhetorik und Perspektive im Werk des Giovanni Antonio de Sacchis* (Hildesheim; New York: Olms, 1999), pp. 75-84; Charles Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, pp. 169-221; Idem, "Pordenone's Cremona Passion Scenes and German Art," pp. 74-96; Furlan, *Il Pordenone* (1988), pp. 23-27, 97-115.

[4] In this regard, my thesis seeks to sustain the idea proposed by Carolyn Smyth that Pordenone's paintings were intended to function as stimuli for spiritual self-examination. Idem, "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes in Cremona Cathedral," p. 102.

are contextually specific and their effects depend on where Pordenone's scenes are located in the nave cycle as well as how they recognize and depart from the artistic concerns of his predecessors.

Beginning in 1514, Cremona cathedral became the locus of one of the most extensive decorative campaigns in all of sixteenth-century Lombardy (figures 75, 76, 77). Within eight years, the walls above the nave arcades, presbytery, and interior façade were transformed by a vast fresco cycle that contained episodes from the life of the Virgin and Christ's Passion. Begun by Boccaccio Boccaccino and continued by Gianfrancesco Bembo, Altobello Melone, and Girolamo Romanino, the cycle courses along the left wall from the entrance to the high altar, around the presbytery, and back down the right wall to culminate with Pordenone's clamorous scenes of *Christ Before Pilate*, the *Fall on the Way to Calvary*, *Christ Nailed to the Cross*, the *Crucifixion*, and *Lamentation* (figures 70–74).[5] As we shall see, the forerunners of the nave cycle variously participated in the exchange of pictorial values and techniques through the Po Valley, underscoring a context of artistic rivalry, in which each painting can be explored as a kind of "material substrate" for competing artistic concerns.[6] In order to

[5] Twenty-seven of what were probably twenty-nine scenes survive from the period 1514-1522. The two missing scenes, which Giulio Bora has argued were painted by Boccaccio Boccaccino and represented the *Baptism of Christ* and the *Entry into Jerusalem,* were probably destroyed when the apse wall was punctured with two rectangular windows in 1573. Idem, "Nota su Pordenone e i Cremonesi (e alcuni nuovi disegni)," in *Il Pordenone, Atti del convegno Internazionale di studio*, pp. 153-157 (p. 154). Sixteenth-century additions to the fresco cycle include Bernardino Gatti's (Il Soiaro) *Resurrection* (1529) (figure 120), Bernardino Campi's *Baptism of Christ* and *Entry into Jerusalem* (1583), Antonio Campi's *Healing of the Centurion's Servant* (1582), and a series of prophets painted in the spandrels of the nave arches (begun 1573) (figures 96-99). Other significant modifications to the interior of the cathedral include the 1530 closing of a large central window located under Boccaccio Boccaccino's *Pantocrator with Saints* (figure 82) in the apse, the enlargement of the presbytery in 1537 followed by further alterations at the behest of Carlo Borromeo in 1575, the addition of two doors that gave access to the lateral naves in 1569, the additional of two *oculi* in the façade, and the raising of the floor of the church in 1605 (the seventeenth-century historian, Giuseppe Bresciani, recorded that prior to the floor's elevation visitors had to descend nine steps). See Franco Voltini, "Le opere e i giorni della Cattedrale," in *Cremona*. *Il Cattedrale*, eds. Franco Voltini and Valerio Guazzoni (Cinisello Balsamo: Pizzi, 1989), pp. 9-65; Idem, "Un itinerario," Ibid., pp. 133-139. See also Alfredo Puerari, *Il Duomo di Cremona* (Cinisello Balsamo: Amilcare Pizzi, 1971), p. 45; Idem, "Contributi alla storia architettonica del Duomo di Cremona," *Bollettino storico cremonese*, v. 2, ser. 25 (1970/71), pp. 17-44.

[6] For "material substrate" see Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 401.

better understand the artistic and theological stakes of Pordenone's Passion frescoes, one must first attempt to identify the character of Cremonese artistic culture during the creation of the nave cycle. Only then can Pordenone's contribution to the cycle and his manipulation of the Passion story be addressed apropos of his artistic identity and the representational efficacy of sacred images.

The Place of Production and the Production of Place

Compared to the fairly recognizable pictorial allusions that Pordenone's Friulian altarpieces register, the range of imitative reference available to artists in Cremona was greater and more diverse. During the first two decades of the sixteenth century, Cremonese painters were drawn to a vast range of artistic values and concerns circulating beyond Lombardy to points North and East. Mario Marubbi has argued that the decade of Venetian rule (1499-1509) was punctuated by a series of local efforts to engage the pictorial culture of the *Serenissima*. This "*processo di venetizzazione,*" as he calls it, was led by the artists Francesco Tacconi and Filippo Mazzola, the presence of the Venetian painter Marco Marziale, and the patronage of the Raimondi, Cambiago, degli Osii, Fodri and Offredo families (figures 78-81).[7] Boccaccio Boccaccino's dazzling apse fresco of the *Pantocrator with Saints Marcellinus, Himerius, Homobonus and Peter the Exorcist* (1506-1507) has been singled out as one of the most conspicuous examples of a Cremonese recognition of Venetian artistic values (figure 82).[8] While the Redeemer's physiognomy is reminiscent of Giovanni Bellini's figures of Christ, such as the *Head of the Redeemer*, one must recognize that in 1506 the "Venetianism" to which Boccaccino's fresco

[7] Mario Marubbi, "Pittore, opere e committenze dall'apogeo dell'età Viscontea alla fine della signoria Sforzesca," in *Storia di Cremona. Il Quattrocento Cremona nel Ducato di Milano (1395-1535),* ed. Giorgio Chittolini (Azzano San Paolo: Bolis Edizioni, 2008), pp. 300-341, esp. pp. 326-333.
[8] Cf. Valerio Guazzoni, "La Cattedrale nella vita religiosa e civile di Cremona," in *Cremona. Il Cattedrale,* pp. 69-125, esp. pp. 90-91; Marubbi, "Pittore, opere e committenze…", p. 329.

refers was rapidly changing (figure 84).[9] Furthermore, the works by local painters such as Lorenzo de Beci, Tommaso Aleni, Galeazzo Campi and others offered Cremonese patrons alternatives that favored hard contours, sculpturally-conceived forms, and/or transalpine morphologies over the complex tonal modulations and diffused lighting effects of their philo-Venetian peers (figures 85-88). This is not to say that the choice offered to local patrons at the end of the fifteenth century was confined to two competing camps of artistic production. Among the Cremonese artists listed here, the practice of imitating the works of their near and distant contemporaries was not exclusive or prescriptive but selectively inclusive and dynamic. Even the re-subjugation of Cremona to the duchy of Milan after the Battle of Agnadello (1509) did not significantly shift local sympathies toward the artistic values celebrated at the Milanese court, nor did the court complement its political ascendency with an invasive strategy of artistic hegemony.[10] Instead, the years spent under Milanese and, subsequently, French rule see no corresponding interruption in the propensity among local patrons to favor stylistic pluralism. In other words, early sixteenth-century Cremonese artistic culture is not characterized by the propagation of autochthonous or

[9] Boccaccino's *Pantocrator with Saints* effectively transformed the devotional character of the presbytery for it necessitated the removal of a massive Trecento *Crucifix* (circa 210 x 214 cm) of supposed Germanic manufacture that was suspended above the roodscreen (figure 83). For more information on the crucifix (often identified as the one currently housed in the Baptistery) and its role in initiating a diffusion of Germanic crucifixes in Cremona see Lia Bellingeri, "Cremona e il gotico 'perduto.' La scultura lignea," *Prospettiva*, n. 95-96 (July – October 1999), pp. 75-91; Luisa Bandera and Andrea Foglia, *Arte lignaria a Cremona: i tesori della Cattedrale* (Azzano San Paolo: Bolis, 2000), p. 38. In 1645, the crucifix became part of an ensemble with a group seventeen terracotta statues painted and gilded that represented "il Monte Calvario nella maniera che hoggidì si vede al Santo Sepolcro di varallo," as recorded by Bresciani, in *Immagini miracolose che sono nella chiesa della città di Cremona*, 1666, ms. Bresciani 17, c. 1, Libreria Civica, Biblioteca statale di Cremona, cc. 2-3; quoted in Bellingeri 1999, p. 81.

[10] The influence of the *chiaroscuro* and *sfumato* effects developed by Leonardo are neither geographically circumscribed nor politically affiliated by the time Cremona yielded to Milanese rule in 1509. If Leonardo's style was appropriated and multiplied among court artists in the service of Ludovico il Moro, such a strategy ended with the invasion of Louis XII in August 1499 and Leonardo's departure for Venice. Gianfranesco Bembo's engagement with the works of Bramantino is significant, but I believe this interaction is articulated in conjunction with a variety of other influences. For the subjugation of Leonardo's style to il Moro's political ends see Luke Syson, "Leonardo and Leonardism in Sforza Milan," in *Artists at Court: Image-Making and Identity, 1300-1500*, ed. Stephen Campbell (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2004), pp. 106-123.

"native" artistic values as was the case in, say, Florence, but from a selectively inclusive process that eschewed dependence on a single center of artistic activity.

What is often taken for granted in discussions of the cathedral's nave cycle is the important role the patrons played in facilitating such inclusivity. Consisting of an annually alternating sub-committee belonging to the *fabbriceria* of the *duomo*, this group of exclusively patrician citizens was known as the *massari*.[11] Their choice to initiate and sustain the massive financial burden of redecorating the cathedral is often justified as an effort to reaffirm civic prestige, solicit spiritual protection, inspire enmity toward the local Jewish community, and direct dispensable revenues away from French invaders (the nave project coincided with the period in which Cremona suffered the oppression of French occupation).[12] Routinely overlooked in this context of political upheaval is the consistent interest among the *massari* for commissioning artists with very distinct styles.[13] The consequent stylistic heterogeneity of the nave frescoes is one of the defining features of the project. But rather than explore what

[11] Pordenone's contract of 20 August 1520 lists the following patrons: Io. Franciscus Zucha esques, Io. Galeazus Maynardus, and Io. Franciscus Valvassor de Argenta. For the most recent publication of the contract see Mario Marubbi, "Regesto dei documenti cinquecenteschi per le 'Storie del Testamento Nuovo'," in *La Cattedrale di Cremona. Affreschi e sculture*, ed. Alessandro Tomei (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana, 2001), pp. 191-206, (pp. 198-199). For the role of the *massari* in the *fabbriceria* see Bora, "Nota su Pordenone e i Cremonesi (e alcuni nuovi disegni)," p. 153; Guazzoni, "La cattedrale nella vita religiosa e civile di Cremona," pp. 69-125; and Smyth, "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes in Cremona Cathedral," pp. 102-105.

[12] Playing host to hundreds, sometimes thousands of mercenary soldiers, Cremona was reduced to little more than a perverted playground for unchecked violence, inordinate taxation, and the tyranny of the French *castellani* such as Janet Benon de Erbonville For the political history of Cremona during the first three decades of the sixteenth century see Francesco Novati, "La Vita e le Opere di Domenico Bordigallo," *Archivio Veneto*, v. 19 (1880), pp. 5-45; Angelo Grandi, *Descrizione dello stato fisico-politico-statistico-storico-biografico della provincia e diocesi di Cremona*, 2 vols. (Orig. publ. Cremona, 1856–58; reprint Cremona: Monotipia cremonese, 1981), I, esp. pp. 695-696; Carlo Bonetti, *Cremona durante le guerre di predominio straniero. 1499-1526 (note e appunti)* (Cremona: R. Deputazione di Storia Patria, 1939), esp. pp. 88-155. For a reading of Pordenone's frescoes in relation to an uprising of anti-Semitism in Cremona see Robert Venturelli, "Pordenone a Cremona: iconografie, contesti, significati," *Venezia Cinquecento*, anno 12, n. 23 (2002), pp. 5-208; and Idem, "'*Duorum populorum divisio*': la *Crocifissione* del Pordenone e il conflitto ebraico-cremonese del 1519-1521," in *La Cattedrale di Cremona*, pp. 163-173.

[13] This observation is made in direct contrast to Alessandro Nova's evaluation of the *massari's* choices: "*I massari del duomo erano interlocutori preparati ed esigenti: ogni anno venicano eletti tre nuovi massari che avevano una libertà pressoché illimitata nelle loro scelte artistiche, ma si può dire che si trattava di un gruppo coerente con un gusto sostanzialmente omogeneo*," in Idem, "Centro, periferia, provincia: Tiziano e Romanino," p. 53.

sustains these differences, scholars have repeatedly attempted to define a common denominator among the artists. This is typically conceived as a shared interest in both northern European and Central Italian pictorial traditions.[14] While the identification of an Italian-transalpine pictorial language acknowledges an awareness about the critical potential of mixed modes of representation, this kind of scholarship also masks a homogenizing tendency that simplifies discourse by generalizing the stylistic frontiers that define the artistic topography of the nave cycle. Concurrent with this underlying tendency is the increasing normalization of the critical language of hybridity in recent scholarship.[15] Notions of stylistic multiplicity or even "pictorial heteroglossia" have become commonplace in art historical discourse. In the literature on Cremona's cathedral, expressions such as the "*tipico linguaggio eclettico-manieristico*" or "*anticlassico*" are taken at face value and tend to obfuscate the need for further reflection.[16] In other words, when the language of alterity becomes normative, its critical potential for describing the particularity of an artistic enterprise is mitigated. The task of understanding the stylistic diversity of the cathedral's nave cycle does not depend on a process of incorporating artistic differences into narrow structures of

[14] Cf. Mina Gregori, "Altobello, Il Romanino e il Cinquecento Cremonese," *Paragone*, n. 69 (1955), pp. 3-28 (pp. 13-15); Idem, "Altobello e G. Francesco Bembo," *Paragone*, n. 93 (1957), pp. 16-40; Cohen, "Pordenone's Cremona Passion Scenes and German Art," pp. 83-85; Idem, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone,* I, pp. 170 & 175; Guazzoni, "La Cattedrale nella vita religiosa e civile di Cremona," p. 99; Marina Daga, "Influenze della grafica tedesca nelle scene della Passione affrescate da Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone nel Duomo di Cremona (1520-1522)," *Arte Documento*, v. 3 (1989), pp. 130-137; Francesco Frangi, "I pittori anticlassici," in *Pittura a Cremona dal Romanico al Settecento*, ed. Mina Gregori (Milan: Cassa di Risparmio delle Provincie Lombarde, 1990), pp. 26-39; Poulsen, "Mode and meaning," pp. 128-129; Smyth "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes at Cremona Cathedral," p. 106.

[15] See Moslund, *Migration Literature and Hybridity,* p. 12.

[16] For the first quote see Voltini, "Le opere e i giorni della Cattedrale," p. 36. The idea of a Lombard/Emilian artistic movement that operated in counter-relation to early twentieth-century conceptions of "classicism" in the Renaissance was brought to the fore by Roberto Longhi. His conception of the *lombardi anticlassici* has been a defining feature of the discourse on sixteenth-century Lombard art and routinely appears in the scholarship on Pordenone. As noted in the Introduction, this label unnecessarily limits interpretation. See Roberto Longhi, "Cose bresciane del Cinquecento," *L'arte*, v. 20 (1917), pp. 99-114; Idem, *Edizione delle opere complete*, 14 vols. (Florence: Sansoni, 1961-1984), V, *Officina ferrarese* (1934), pp. 5-109; *ampliamenti* (1940), pp. 123-171; *nuovi ampliamenti* (1940-55), pp. 173-195.

resemblance or on trendy blanket terms, but rather on identifying how ideas about the dominant sources of artistic charisma operated within the local artistic culture.

Many of the cycle's paintings register (to varying degrees) the need to both acknowledge and depart from the artistic values that were becoming most characteristic of works produced in northern and Central Italy as well as beyond the Alps. Bembo's *Presentation in the Temple* (1515-16), for example, recognizes works by his German and Central Italian peers: his composition draws on the setting and arrangement of the figures in Albrecht Dürer's print (1505) of the same subject as well as certain figural prototypes associated with Raphael's Roman works, such as the kneeling woman in the left foreground of the *Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple* (1511-12) (figures 89-92). However, Bembo's fresco asserts that it is not a passive aggregate of diverse "influences" by seeming to caricature Raphael's kneeling woman through a deliberately coarse idiom of execution.[17] This idiom is extended to all of the holy figures, whose roughly-treated features create a striking contrast to the polished handling of the portraits of Bembo's Cremonese contemporaries on the right side of the composition. It is as if Bembo wants the beholder to notice that the crude painting of the holy figures is a calculated choice. This deliberately unrefined manner of articulating bodies can be read as a response to Raphael's *disegno*, if *disegno* is understood as the rendering of bodies as coherent volumes, as well as the theological concerns that subtend Raphael's style of perfected humanity. A similar argument can be made for Altobello Melone's *Massacre of the Innocents* (1516-17) when compared to Michelangelo's *Battle of Cascina* (1504-05) or Marcantonio Raimondi's print after

[17] For the grotesque nature of Bembo's figures see Gregori, "Altobello e G. Francesco Bembo," p. 28; Idem, "Altobello, Il Romanino e il Cinquecento Cremonese," pp. 3-28. Bembo had visited Central Italy in 1509. For his exposure to the art of Rome see Louis A. Waldman, "Two Foreign Artists in Renaissance Florence. Alonso Berruguete and Gian Francesco Bembo," *Apollo,* v. 484 (2002), pp. 22-29; and Marco Tanzi, "Il crepuscolo degli eccentrici a Cremona," *Prospettiva,* n. 134-135 (2009), pp. 25-51.

Raphael's *Massacre of Innocents* (1510-14), which we might think of as paradigmatic examples of bodies in frenzied motion (figures 93, 94, 95). Where these Central Italian examples preserved the dignity of the figures, Altobello employs blatantly un-idealized figure types; and where Michelangelo and Marcantonio gave each body, overlapping or not, a kind of sculptural integrity and allowed each figure to create and occupy its own space, Altobello denies the coherency of the human form and its location in space by fragmenting and confusing body parts to create an inchoate mass of colliding forms. Altobello's and Bembo's critical degradations of the values associated with Central Italian art can be seen as a form of artistic resistance, but they also work to underscore the conception of a debased or incomplete state of humanity before Christ's redemptive sacrifice.[18]

Much like Pordenone's altarpieces, the works of his Cremonese peers withstand characterizations of local artistic practice in terms of filiations with a single source of artistic charisma or unidirectional flows of "influence" through a hierarchical structure. This phenomenon is further complicated by the importation of foreign artists like Romanino and Pordenone, who were themselves engaged in analogous but different processes of self-differentiation. Taken together, such processes can be said to participate in a consistent reshaping of the artistic landscape of the cathedral, a process that, in the words of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "holds heterogeneities together without their ceasing to be heterogenous."[19] Such an

[18] A few of the more explicit biblical passages for this view of humanity are: Genesis 6,5; Jeremiah 17,6; Matthew 15,19; Romans 6,6; Galatians 5,24.

[19] Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 350. In trying to account for Cremona's lack of dependency on a single, dominant artistic culture and the inadequacy of explanatory models that rely on hierarchical systems, it is tempting to draw on Deleuze's and Guattari's conception of the rhizome. As a model for envisioning spaces in which intensities circulate along horizontal lines of connection, the rhizome seems to offer a valuable means of engaging artistic exchange without "centers" or "peripheries" of any kind, be they conceptual, artistic, political, religious, economic, etc., and without limiting networks of influence to a few, predictable points of origin. Despite these apparent advantages, rhizomorphic multiplicities posit the absence of all conducting agencies and organizing

enterprise can also be understood as a form of artistic "topogenesis" or the production of place, the character of which was shaped by both local and nonlocal artists.[20]

Of crucial significance for the nave cycle – and thus for the development of the cathedral's artistic character as a whole – was the importation of artists. The invitation extended to Romanino and Pordenone by the *massari* was predicated on the assumption that these artists would impart singularity to the cycle and enhance the impression of the cathedral as "being near the heart of things," irrespective of where that heart may be.[21] As the most ambitious fresco program to have ever been undertaken in the city, the nave cycle designated the cathedral as the defining presence of Cremonese pictorial culture between 1514 and 1522, and might best be described as both an epicenter along pathways of artistic migration and the premiere venue for local talent. In this way, Cremona cathedral, like the church of San Marco in Pordenone, acquired its distinctive character by providing what Edward Casey calls "the changing but indispensible material medium of journeys."[22]

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memory, the erasure of subjects and objects, a situation in which all individuals are interchangeable and there are only directions of motion with no points or positions. As such, the potential applicability of the rhizome as a conceptual map in the service of historical inquiry is highly contestable. It is equally tempting to draw a comparison with the laws of hydrodynamics as a means of characterizing the confrontation between artistic cultures. Henri Lefebvre, in his discussion of how social spaces superimpose themselves on one another, draws attention to the principles of hydrodynamics and the consequences of colliding wave movements, rhythms, and frequencies. Wave collisions, regardless of intensity, size, or angle of intersection, always result in both the interference and interpenetration of opposing forces. The analogy does not explain what dictates or maintains contrasted movements of forces, but it offers a conception of relational dynamics that recognizes different forms of mutual permeation between opposed forces and accommodates varied intensities of interaction over time. Nevertheless, natural phenomena are very different from artistic phenomena and the dynamics of fluids cannot account for the variety and nature of components, whether internal or external, static or mobile, absorptive or dispersive, resistant or passive, etc., that weighs upon artistic interactions. However impractical hydrodynamics or rhizomes may be for conceiving the places of artistic exchange, such models help disclose the daunting complexity of exchange circuits. Cf. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, esp. pp. 6-11, 20-23; Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp. 87-88; and Stephen Hardy, "Placiality: The Renewal of the Significance of Place in Modern Cultural Theory," *Brno Studies in English, Brno, Masarykova Univerzita*, v. 26, n. 25 (2000), pp. 85-100.

[20] Casey, *Fate of the Place,* p. 76.

[21] Clifford Geertz, "Centers, Kings and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power," in *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books), pp. 121-146 (p. 123).

[22] Casey, *Getting Back into Place,* p. 274.

In exploring the ways in which artistic migration helped characterize early sixteenth-century Cremonese pictorial culture, I do not wish to insinuate a resemblance to colonization, in which a dominant force creates a fixed identity for the dominated so as to reflexively invent and maintain its own identity. The strategies of exclusion that colonizers impose are mitigated at Cremona for the context is one of brief visitation by nonlocal artists, not settlement, and the differences manifested by the collision of local and foreign ideas and practices were often appropriated and indigenized as defining features of the local. For example, Pordenone's contribution to the fresco program included the introduction of a startlingly invasive or outward-projecting form of illusionism and, consequently, a different visual mode of address compared to his peers. This form of illusionism is particularly apparent among the prophets the artist painted in the spandrels below the nave scenes (figures 70, 71, 72). At that time, none of the other nave arches were adorned with such figures and their appearance marked both a stylistic and iconographic divergence from the rest of the cycle. This disjuncture provoked the redecoration of the arch spandrels with a series of prophets executed by the next generation of local artists that co-opted Pordenone's mode of address. Begun by Vincenzo Campi, Francesco Somenzi and Cristoforo Magnani in 1573, these later paintings reveal competing desires to rival Pordenone's innovations by extending the application of projective illusionism beyond the flat surface of the wall to the curved, three-dimensional surfaces of the piers that divide the bays (figures 96-99).[23] The interventions of these artists transformed the singular performance of Pordenone's projective illusionism into a shared objective. Moreover, the addition of the prophets fundamentally altered beholders' engagement with the

[23] See, for example, the prophet located in the spandrel under Boccaccio Boccaccino's *Circumcision*. This prophet can be identified as Malachias since his banderole displays the following extraction from Malachi 3:1, "*statim veniet ad templum sanctus sum Dominator quem vos vultis* (the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple)."

adjoining narrative scenes executed by Pordenone's predecessors: when beheld in tandem, the narrative scenes and the prophets present contrasting modes of receding and outward-projecting illusionism. Following Pordenone's example, each of the later prophets grasps a banderole with verses from the Old Testament. The incorporation of text introduced an additional system of signification to the earlier scenes and extended the typological relationship Pordenone utilized between transcribed portents and pictorial fulfillment. The prophets painted by Campi, Somenzi, and Magnani may be read, on the one hand, as a retroactive attempt to normalize the structure of typology throughout the nave, but on the other, as a reassertion of stylistic disparity, for while the use of projective illusionism unites the prophets it also distinguishes them from the narrative scenes of Pordenone's predecessors. The result is one of functional integration without a clear aesthetic reconciliation.

As such, the cathedral project presents a conjunction of distinct artistic performances that resists easy characterization. This does not mean that early sixteenth-century Cremonese artistic culture was an anomaly. If anything, the toleration of stylistic diversity in the cathedral might be considered normative of Lombard narrative cycles compared to the unusual homogenizing aesthetics practiced on the walls of the Sistine Chapel, the Venetian Scuole Grandi, or by those Milanese artists who suppressed their individual voices in pursuit of a style *alla Sforzesca*.[24] The pattern of artistic activity exhibited in Cremona cathedral between 1514 and 1522

[24] For the homogenizing aesthetics of the Sistine Chapel wall frescoes see Johannes Wilde, "The Decoration of the Sistine Chapel," in *Art and Politics in Renaissance Italy*, British Academy Lectures, intro. George Holmes, (orig. publ. London, 1959; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 241-261 (pp. 247-249); Leopold D. Ettlinger, *The Sistine Chapel before Michelangelo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 33; and Arnold Nasselrath, "The Painters of Lorenzo the Magnificent in the Chapel of Pope Sixtus IV in Rome," in *The Fifteenth Century Frescoes in the Sistine Chapel: Recent Restorations of the Vatican Museums*, eds. Francesco Buranelli and Allen Duston (Vatican City State: Edizioni Musei Vaticani, 2003), pp. 39-76 (p. 49, 54). For Venetian conservatism see Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), esp. pp. 18-27, 42-76, 81-86; and David Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice,* esp. pp. 1-10. For the "*stile alla sfrorzesca"* see Syson, "Leonardo and Leonardism in Sforza Milan," pp. 106-123.

may simply be the consequence of a continually alternating commissioning body, but the impact of this activity lies in the interanimation of distinct artistic voices.[25]

A Problem of Language

The arrival of Pordenone in Cremona was immediately preceded by the abrupt dismissal of Girolamo Romanino by the newly appointed *massari*, a breach of contract that the litigious Brescian would prosecute into the 1540s.[26] At the start of 1520 new office holders took control of the commission and, quite simply, the art of Pordenone possessed something that they wanted.[27] The question that continues to preoccupy modern scholars is *what* that something was. A variety of answers have been proposed and the majority attempt to elucidate the peculiar effects of the artist's style. This endeavor is typically pursued by turning to Vasari, who first distinguished the artist from his peers by claiming that it was Pordenone who brought "*il buon modo di dipingere*" to Cremona.[28] Vasari's account of the style Pordenone utilized in the cathedral frescoes is frustratingly taciturn: "…*una maniera di figure grandi,*

[25] For a discussion of how the disparate voices of a text interanimate each other see Moslund, *Migration Literature and Hybridity…,* p. 70, especially his discussion of Mikhail Bakhtin.

[26] The cathedral archives reveal that Romanino took repeated action against the *massari* for what was, by all accounts, an egregious abuse of power. Marubbi, "Regesto dei documenti cinquecenteschi" pp. 191-206.

[27] There is no evidence to suggest that Romanino's removal from the project was the result of his patrons' dissatisfaction, nor should we necessarily consider Pordenone's frescoes a corrective lesson: Romanino's works were not destroyed or tampered with. For the debates over Romanino's dismissal see Maria Luisa Ferrari, *Il Romanino* (Milan: Bramante, 1961), pp. 9-10, 30; Alessandro Nova, *Girolamo Romanino* (Turin: Allemandi, 1994), pp. 233-234; and Smyth, "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes at Cremona Cathedral," p. 102. Pordenone's activity in Cremona must not be regarded as the result of a lack of success in larger socio-economic centers. By 1520, Pordenone's paintings were already exhibited alongside that of Titian's in the Malchiostro Chapel at Treviso. In Cremona, Pordenone was a guest worker of the *fabbriceria del duomo*, a position attractive enough to draw the artist away from a high-profile commission under one of the most celebrated humanist poets of the Mantuan court, Paride da Ceresara. For the Malchiostro Chapel see Giuseppe Liberali, *Lotto, Pordenone e Tiziano a Treviso: cronologie, interpretazioni ed ambientamenti inediti, Memorie*. *Classe di scienze morali e lettere,* v. 33, fasc. 3 (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1963); David Rosand, "Titian's Light as Form and Symbol," *Art Bulletin*, v. 57, n. 1 (1975), pp. 58-64; Charles Cohen, "Observations on the Malchiostro chapel," in *Il Pordenone*, *Atti del convegno Internazionale di studio*, pp. 27-33; Furlan, *Il Pordenone* (1988), pp. 22-23, 92-97; and Carolyn Smyth, "Insiders and Outsiders: Titian, Pordenone and Broccardo Malchiostro's Chapel in Treviso Cathedral," *Studi tizianeschi*, v. 5 (2007), pp. 32-75. For the façade project of the palace of Paride da Ceresara see Perina, "Pordenone a Mantova: gli affreschi della dimora di Paride da Ceresara," pp. 110-114.

[28] Vasari, *Le Vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, VI, p. 493. Vasari himself struggled with the non-verbal element of artistic practice. Cf. Carmen C. Bambach, *Drawing and Painting in the Italian Renaissance Workshop. Theory and Practice, 1300-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 33.

colorito terribile, e scorti che hanno forza e vivacità" (a manner of great figures, terrifying coloring, and foreshortening that possesses force and liveliness).[29] With this description in mind, art historians have repeatedly attempted to define Pordenone's singularity by employing the term *terribilità* as a stable aesthetic category to assert an affinity between Pordenone's Cremona frescoes and the art of Rome, specifically that of Michelangelo.[30] During the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, the critical language of Italian art was liable to alteration and *terribilità* could be employed to describe an artist as different from Michelangelo as Giorgione.[31] Nevertheless, scholars have held on to this term as an index of Pordenone's "modernity," which they connect to the epithet used in the documents to distinguish the artist while decorating the cathedral: "*pictor modernus*."[32] This appellation has become so ideologically entrenched in the literature as to rescind its value. Scholars assuming that Pordenone's Cremonese patrons employed the modifier *modernus* to distinguish the supposed "Roman" quality of the painter's style have provided no compelling

[29] Vasari, *Le Vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, VI, p. 493. The Cremona frescoes were first mentioned in 1543 by Marcantonio Michiel, who offered even less insight than Vasari: "*Dentro el Domo la Passione sopra la porta maistra e la Pietà a man manca della porta, ove è el Cristo morto che gira in ogni verso, tutte figure grandi a fresco, furono de mano di Zanantonio da Pordenon"* (Inside the Duomo the Passion above the main door and the Pietà on the left-hand side of the door, where [there] is the Dead Christ that turns in every direction [or moves towards one in every direction], all great figures in fresco, were by the hand of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone). See Marcantonio Michiel, *Notizia d'opere di disegno* (1521-1543), publ. and ill. by D. Jacopo Morelli, ed. Gustavo Frizzoni (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1884), p. 84.

[30] Jan Bialostocki and Paola Barrochi have demonstrated how unstable the category of *terribilità* was in the *Cinquecento*. See Jan Bialostocki, "Terribilità," in *Stil und Überlieferung in der Kunst des Abendlandes: Akten des 21. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte in Bonn 1964*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Mann, 1967), III, pp. 222-225; Paola Barocchi, ed., *La Vita di Michelangelo nella redazione del 1550 e del 1568*, 5 vols. (Milan: Riccardo Ricciardi, 1962), II, p.472-479. Pordenone was celebrated by Lucovico Dolce as a rival of Michelangelo in the art of *disegno* during his own lifetime, but this did not occur until 1536. For Dolce's praise of Pordenone see Caterina Furlan, "Il Pordenone and Lodovico Dolce," *Il Noncello*, n. 45 (1977), pp. 119-128.

[31] For the *terribilità* of Giorgione'a art see Ferrante Carli's (c. 1628) description of Giovanni Lanfranco's cupola in Sant'Andrea della Valle in Maddalena Spagnolo, *Correggio: geografia e storia della fortuna (1528 - 1657)* (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana, 2005), p. 234.

[32] For the various appearances of the epithet in the surviving documents see Marubbi, "Regesto dei documenti cinquecenteschi," pp. 199-201; Federico Sacchi, *Notizie pittoriche cremonesi* (Cremona: Ronzi & Signori, 1872), pp. 187-189, 273-75; Di Maniago, *Storia delle belle arti friulane*, 2nd ed. (Udine: Mattiuzzi, 1823), pp. 318-324.

historical evidence.[33] On the contrary, Marubbi has argued on the basis of a document from 11 December 1516 in which the *massari* are identified as the "*moderni massari*," that *pictor modernus* merely indicates that Pordenone was the painter currently employed by the *fabbriceria*.[34] Notwithstanding, the primary, temporal definition of the term can be expanded to denote a departure from past traditions or values. While keeping with Marubbi's argument, I believe this extended definition of *modernus* can be applied to Pordenone's activity at Cremona as it is consonant with commissioning body's disposition to stylistic pluralism. That said, considerations of the artist's status as a "modern" painter cannot rely on oversimplifications of historically slippery terminology. In what follows it will become clear how dramatically Pordenone's frescoes depart from the art of Michelangelo.

Recognizing the lack of a reliable historic vocabulary, Caterina Furlan has popularized the term *clamorosità* to describe the effect of Pordenone's nave frescoes. For Furlan, this term conveys the tumultuous expressivity of Pordenone's pictures in a way that reinforces their *popolaresco* character.[35] Cohen similarly proposed that Pordenone's style at Cremona is the self-conscious deformation of a Central Italian way of rendering form combined with a Germanic expressive quality and conditioned

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[33] Cf. Rodolfo Pallucchini, "Giovanni Antonio Pordenone, "pictor modernus,"" in *Il Pordenone*, ed. Caterina Furlan, Villa Manin di Passariano (Milan: Electa, 1984), pp. 13-24; Ferrari, *Il Romanino*, pp. 9-10; Cohen, "Pordenone's Cremona Passion Scenes and German Art," p. 85; Idem, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone,* I, p. 170; and Bertling Biaggini, *Il Pordenone: Pictor Modernus*, esp. pp. 75; Furlan, *Il Pordenone (*1988), pp. 23-27.

[34] Marubbi, "Le "Storie del Testamento Nuovo": cronaca di un cantiere," p. 87. See also Guazzoni, "La Cattedrale nella vita religiosa e civile di Cremona," p. 103. It is interesting that Pordenone is only artist associated with the nave project or any decorative addition to the cathedral in the sixteenth century that is identified with the modifier "*modernus*" among the collections of cathedral documents I have examined.

[35] Furlan's use of the words "*clamoroso*" and "*clamorosità*" seems to derive from the studies by Rodolfo Pallucchini and Sydney Freedberg. Cf. Rodolfo Pallucchini, *La pittura veneziana del cinquecento*, 2 vols. (Novara: Istituto Geografico De Agostini, 1944), I, pp. xxxiv-xxxv; and Sydney Freedberg, *Painting in Italy: 1500-1600,* 3rd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 291. For Furlan's use of the term see "Rivisitando il Pordenone: congetture, ipotesi, proposte," in *Il Pordenone* (1984), p. 69; Idem, *Il Pordenone* (1988), pp. 24, 26, 102 & 124 (p. 26 for the *popolaresco* character of his painting).

by the artist's provincial temperament.[36] While these evaluations suggest the calculated nature of Pordenone's engagement with diverse artistic cultures, they naively perpetuate the early modern practice of equating pictorial style with personal temperament. Sixteenth-century Italian art treatises typically contextualize the *aria* and *maniera* of an artist according to his or her geographic origins or habitation.[37] A drawback to this particular practice of "socio-territorial inscription" is the bias it perpetuates: because Pordenone is from the Friuli he is *ipso facto* rustic, unsophisticated, and vulgar.[38]

More recently, Hanne Kolind Poulsen has argued that Pordenone's desirability was dependent on an audacious mode of direct psychological engagement, which she identifies as the "obtrusiveness" of his mode of address.[39] For Poulsen, the projective illusionism of Pordenone's frescoes is symptomatic of a "baroque modus" which was employed at Cremona at the behest of the *massari* as propaganda for the Catholic reform movement.[40] Given the absence of textual sources recording the religious sympathies of the patrons, evaluating Pordenone's frescoes in terms of institutionally-endorsed religious propaganda in 1520, regardless of the cause it advocates, must

[36] More generally, Cohen characterizes the art of Pordenone as existing between dialect and language, implying that the difficulty in characterizing Pordenone's style stems from its nebulous position between a regional variety and a standardized or canonical language of art. A problem that emerges here is the difficulty in determining what Pordenone's geographically disparate contemporaries would have considered the "canonical" language of Italian art to be during the first three decades of the sixteenth century.

[37] Cf. David Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 56-59; Idem, *The Judgment of Sense: Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 117-124; Martin Kemp, "'Equal excellences': Lomazzo and the Explanation of Individual Style in the Visual Arts," *Renaissance Studies*, v. 1, n. 1 (March 1987), pp 1-26.

[38] For a succinct description of the role of socio-territorial inscription in migration discourse see Angels Pascual-de-Sans, "Sense of Place and Migration Histories Idiotopy and Idiotope," *Area*, v. 36, n. 4 (2004), pp. 348-357 (p. 350).

[39] Poulsen, "Obtrusive Paintings," pp. 265-272; Idem, "Mode and meaning," pp. 119-153.

[40] This view is presented in contrast to Cohen's tentative interpretation of Pordenone's frescoes as anti-Lutheran propaganda defending the Catholic Church. Cohen's argument stems from the inclusion of the rare motif of the fight for the indivisible robe of Christ. Poulsen suggests that the motif can be read in "two mutually exclusive ways," depending on the audience. However, given the context of religious debates circulating in Cremona around 1520, Poulsen's assertion implies a segregation of religious allegiances that did not yet exist. Cf. Cohen, "Pordenone's Cremona Passion Scenes and German Art," p. 78; and Poulsen, "Mode and meaning," p. 138.

acknowledge the limitations of its applicability. Poulsen concentrates on the common desire among Italian reformers for a "sincere, intimate faith" and how Pordenone's technique of invasive illusionism activates an emotional responsiveness that satisfies that desire.[41] While such a claim may be true as far as it goes, the designation "baroque" seems to distort the situation.[42] Rather than confer added nuance, the application of a "baroque modus" to Pordenone's pictorial practice decontextualizes the artist and his work, dislodging his innovations from custom and fashion. The term baroque is contextually specific and saddled with ideological baggage, both positive and negative, that places a needless filter over the historic lens through which Pordenone's works are investigated. The method of looking past an artist to a later period in order to describe an earlier phenomenon draws false lines of connectivity and is about as a constructive as describing the Sacre Monti as surrealist for their inclusion of *objets trouvés*.

Notwithstanding the preceding discourse, I will concentrate on how a contextually-specific artistic persona is generated through the tasks of a maker of sacred images and how these images served as the instruments by which the faithful negotiated their relation to the divine. As mentioned above, Pordenone's frescoes draw on a long-standing tradition in northern Europe for Passion imagery that confronted beholders with disturbing images of Christ's suffering and death. Such images were designed to not only stimulate empathy, but challenge the faithful to see beyond Christ's disfigured corporeality. In other words, the story of Christ's Passion

[41] Poulsen, "Mode and meaning," p. 138.

[42] Poulsen is only the most recent scholar to emphasize the "baroque" qualities of Pordenone's style. A few others include: Adolfo Venturi, *Storia dell'arte italiana* (Milan: Hoepli, 1928), v. 9 (La pittura del Cinquecento), pt. 3, p. 672; Nikolaus Pevsner, *Barockmalerei in den romanischen Ländern. Die italienische Malerei vom Ende der Renaissance bis zum ausgehenden Rokoko* (Wildpark-Potsdam: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1928), p. 40; Schwarzweller, *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, pp. 62-63; Roberto Longhi, "Ampliamenti nell'officina ferrarese" (1940), V, p. 151; Freedberg, *Painting in Italy: 1500-1600*, p. 294; Philippe Morel, "Morfologia delle cupole dipinte da Correggio a Lanfranco," *Bollettino d'Arte*, anno 69, serie 6, n. 23 (1984), pp. 1-34, esp. p. 30 nt. 32; Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 228.

is itself a test of conviction and not just for the protagonist.[43] What, then, specifically distinguishes the way Pordenone's scenes inspire spiritual introspection? In what follows I will argue that this test is compounded in Pordenone's frescoes by a mode of representation that exploits the spatial ambivalence inherent to the depiction of violence in order to both distinguish the painter and enliven the mediating function of these images between the visible and the invisible.[44]

Beyond Boundaries: Activating Place

Much like the critical pursuits of Gianfrancesco Bembo and Altobello Melone, Pordenone's mode of representation recognizes the theological implications of subverting the ideals of Central Italian *disegno*.[45] But in Pordenone's scenes, the derogation of human form is animated by an excess of violence that threatens the underlying syntax of pictorial space itself. Unlike his predecessors, who adorned their figural compositions with mathematically calibrated illusions of spatial recession, Pordenone eschewed any depth of field, choosing instead to cultivate a visually striking and optically divergent form of illusionism that projects figures out of the picture plane.[46] As noted above, the effect of this technique is demonstrated by the

[43] As Peter Parshall put it: "Spiritual uncertainty and the threat of hypocrisy or false belief are the leitmotifs of the story." Idem, "Penitence and *Pentimenti*: Hieronymus Bosch's *Mocking of Christ* in London," in *Tributes in Honor of James H. Marrow: Studies in Painting and Manuscript Illumination of the late Middle Ages and Northern Renaissance*, eds. Jeffery Hamburger and Anne Korteweg (London: Miller, 2006), pp. 373-379 (p.378).

[44] For an insightful reading of how certain Assyrian relief sculptures activate a kind of perceptual perturbation and their potential psychoanalytic ramifications see Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit, *The Forms of Violence: Narrative in Assyrian Art and Modern Culture* (New York: Schocken Books, 1985), esp. pp. 20, 33, 37, & 110.

[45] Irreverence for a Central Italian way of conceiving form is implied by the figure that bends over to restrain Christ in the *Nailing to the Cross*. This figure, whose leggings have slipped down to reveal his buttocks can be read as an incongruous reference to (and debasement of) similar figures in Michelangelo's *Battle* cartoon.

[46] Projective illusionism, as it is understood here, should not be aligned with or presumed to be elucidated by Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo's notion of "*prospettiva inversa*" (reverse perspective). Pordenone's illusionism does not adhere to a mathematically consistent form of perspective – projective or recessive. Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, *Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scultura ed architettura* (Milan 1584), in *Scritti sulle arti*, ed. Roberto Paolo Ciardi, 2 vols. (Florence: Marchi & Bertolli, 1973-1975), II, p. 291. Andrea Theil has situated Pordenone's frescoes within a history of worm's-eye view perspective or "*Froschperspektive*" indebted to Mantegna and considers the relief-like compositions of Pordenone's nave scenes and the more atmospheric recessional space of the

prophets who lean out of roundels below the narratives, but also by the rearing horse in the scene of *Christ before Pilate*, the small child and the figure of Christ in the *Fall on the Way to Calvary*, and most emphatically by the group of murderous soldiers, the seamless garment over which they fight, and the shaft of the cross that transgress the frame in *Christ's Nailing* (figures 70, 71, 72). Such projections are indicative of a compositional dynamic that compresses bodies into spaces too shallow to contain them. The result is unlike anything ever accomplished before in large-scale Italian paintings of the Passion. The projective forms of Pordenone's compositions circumvent the horizon of visual expectation by denying the authority of the frame and the recessional organization of pictorial space. Moreover, the diffusive figural compositions do not privilege a single, stationary viewpoint; instead, the riotous crowds that press against and beyond the picture plane encourage a dynamic, mobilized perception that is appropriate to a narrative series and to the processional movement towards Calvary.[47] Pordenone's liquidation of the receding perspectival space employed by the earlier artists is bound to a pursuit of narrative momentum and the kinesthetic experience of beholders who follow the motion of the Passion. This experience would have been most often a collective one: because of their enormous dimensions and location at the cathedral's entrance (and thus within the most accessible space of the nave), Pordenone's frescoes presuppose viewing by the entire congregation.[48]

Crucifixion to thematize a shift from a pagan time (*ante legem*) to one following Christ's death (*sub gratiam*). Theil, *Il Pordenone: Studein zu seiner Bildsprache*, pp. 41-44.

[47] For mobilized perception see Svetlana Alpers and Michael Baxandall, *Tiepolo and the Pictorial Intelligence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 10ff.

[48] Pordenone's three frescoes above the arches of the nave are twice as large as those of his predecessors: each occupies a space that is the width of an entire bay as opposed to half: *Christ before Pilate* (approx. 325 x 620 cm), the *Fall on the Way to Calvary* (approx. 325 x 750 cm), *Christ Nailed to the Cross* (approx. 325 x 730 cm), the *Lamentation* (approx. 640 x 405 cm). Pordenone's *Crucifixion* (approx. 9 x 12m) is the largest frescoed scene in the cathedral.

Acts of worship predicated on bodily movement in and through the space of the cathedral extend well beyond official liturgical processions such as those at the offertory and communion.[49] The *memoria passionis* – enacted in sacramental rite and private devotion – can be aroused, as Jeanne Halgren Kilde has noted, by anyone moving from west to east in a cruciform church, for in doing so one "ascends" the cross to the altar.[50] The placement of Pordenone's Passion scenes at the cathedral's west end, and particularly the *Crucifixion* on the interior façade, advocates the enactment of this spiritual journey in the opposite direction, effectively reminding beholders that the path of redemption is always before them, regardless of whether one is entering or exiting the place of worship (figures 76 and 77). But the message they broadcast would have resonated most powerfully on those occasions when throngs of worshippers gathered to accompany the procession of the host down the length of the nave and across the threshold that Pordenone's *Crucifixion* overshadows (figure 100).

One of the most widely attended liturgical ceremonies in sixteenth-century Cremona was the summer feast of Corpus Domini. During the celebration, services of the Mass and office affirmed the transcendent nature and consequences of receiving the Eucharistic substance, but it was the feast's processional and expository components that monopolized the laity's attention.[51] Beginning and ending at the cathedral, the Corpus Domini procession was administered by both civic and religious

[49] Following a papal bull of Calixtus III, the cathedral of Cremona discontinued the use of the local "*rito Offrediano*" and adopted the Roman rite (circa 1480). See Ferrante Aporti, *Memorie di Storia Ecclesiastica Cremonese*, 2 vols. (Cremona: Manini 1837), II, pp. 161-162.

[50] Jeanne Halgren Kilde, *Sacred Power, Sacred Space. An Introduction to Christian Architecture and Worship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 85.

[51] For the origins of the Feast of Corpus Domini as well as the popularity and instrumentality of the procession see Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), esp. pp. 243-271. Aporti notes that the other important processions conducted in sixteenth-century Cremona were held in accordance with the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, on the Sundays preceding the Ember Days, and the Feast of Saint Agatha, but does not mention whether or not the Eucharist was exhibited. Aporti, *Memorie di Storia Ecclesiastica Cremonese*, II, pp.189-190, 201.

authorities to maximize attendance and enhance the magnificence surrounding this ritualized performance of communal adoration.[52] As the congregation witnessed the presence and orchestrated movement of the host (Christ's real body) through the crowded space of the nave and into the streets of Cremona, Pordenone's scenes of the Passion provided more than a visual frame for the ceremony. The projective illusions of these frescoes seek to intensify the sensation of congruity between real and fictive space and, by extension, between the viewer and his or her surroundings, a sensation further enhanced by the cramped conditions of a nave swarmed with worshippers and the flux and flow of a crowd that moves as a single continuous body. The aggregation of pictures, lay people, and Eucharist along the cathedral's central passageway exalted the ubiquity of Christ as host (real body), Christ as image (imitated body), and Christ as Church (mystical body). However, the resultant assemblage was an uneasy and disjunctive one. The form of connectedness established between Pordenone's frescoes and the laity reinforced the visual and bodily experience of space as a violent or crushing force that imposes itself on beholders and painted figures alike.[53] The impact of such force – both within and without the painting – is disconcerting, but *not* because it erases distinctions between fiction and reality to create, as one scholar has proposed: "a common space in which the decoration and the spectator exist together

[52] Each year the *podestà* and vicar general of the diocese issued edicts for the Corpus Domini procession. In a document of 1571, the *podestà* ordered that the streets along the procession route be cleared of rubbish and decorated with banners. He also urged citizens, particularly the members of the *Collegi e le Corporazioni d'arte,* to carry torches or large lit candles and penalized those who did not attend. Likewise, in 1599, the vicar imposed disciplinary measures on those ecclesiastics who did not participate, indicating that a notary should take attendance. He also issued instructions for the organization of those processing according to their rank and dignity. Most remarkably, the same edict prohibits the display of profane images and objects along the processional route as well as the bearing of small pastries and other edibles ("*offelle, bizzolani et altre cosa da mangier*"), presumably so as not to interfere with the exposition of the living bread. The itinerary of the Corpus Domini procession is recorded in the 1571 edict of the *podestà*. See Maria Luisa Corsi and Andrea Foglia, eds., *Vita religiosa a Cremona nel Cinquecento: mostra di documenti e arredi sacri*, Exh. Cat. Cremona, Palazzo vescovile, 8 June – 28 July 1985 (Cremona: Curia vescovile, 1985), pp. 116-117.

[53] My thinking here is influenced by the provocative discussion of congested relationality in Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit, *Caravaggio's Secrets* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998), pp. 15, 59-63, 71, 81.

in seamless unity."[54] Rather, what is at issue here is the tension that such force elicits between the beholders' awareness of what is real and their willingness to imagine themselves beyond the real.[55]

At the same time, the ambitious artifice of the projecting cross, murderous soldiers, and swathe of drapery that transgress the picture frame in the scene of *Christ's Nailing* (figure 72 and 101), indicates an artist eager to contest the authority of local and nonlocal competitors and assert his own preeminence within Cremona's artistic scene. Such virtuoso feats of illusionism purport to show things that we should not be able to see – as if the object, rather than its effects, constitute something in excess of representation – but in doing so they run the risk of exposing the fictiveness of painterly simulations by reflexively calling attention to their implausibility.[56] For example, the painted frames that encapsulate the scenes of Pordenone's predecessors function as conceptual boundaries that distinguish each fresco as an exclusive and separate object.[57] As we scrutinize a picture's contents, however, the frame disappears. It is, as theorists of the frame have argued, a self-effacing marker of difference.[58] However, where the fictive frame is violated by Christ's cross or the

[54] Poulsen, "Mode and Meaning," p. 126.
[55] As Alessandro Nova has argued for the chapels of the Sacro Monte di Varallo, the "reality effect" of the imagery was first and foremost a desired consequence of the visitor. Alessandro Nova, ""Popular" Art in Renaissance Italy. Early Responses to the Holy Mountain at Varallo," in *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America 1450-1650,* ed. Claire Farago (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 113-126, esp. p. 121. See also Roland Barthes, "The Reality Effect," in *French Literary Theory Today: A Reader*, ed. Tzvetan Todorov, trans. R. Carter (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press 1982), pp. 11-17.
[56] What is at stake here is not the actual generation of the hyper-real or simulation as it has been described in postmodern discourse, but the pointing to and subversion of the image's potential to do more than represent. See Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), pp. 1-43. See also Stephen J. Campbell's discussion of naturalism and simulation in, "Vasari's Renaissance and its Renaissance Alternatives," in *Renaissance Theory*, eds. James Elkins and Robert Williams (New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 47-67.
[57] See Paul Duro, "Introduction," in *The Rhetoric of the Frame: Essays on the Boundaries of the Artwork*, ed. Paul Duro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 1-10.
[58] See Jacques Derrida, "Parergon," in *The Truth in Painting,* trans. Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987), pp. 15-147, esp. p. 73; Louis Marin, "The Frame of Representation and some of its Figures," in *On Representation*, trans. Catherine Porter (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 352-372; Paul Duro, "Containment and Transgression in French Seventeenth-Century Ceiling Painting," in *The Rhetoric of the Frame*, pp. 44-62, esp. pp. 45-48.

brawling soldiers in Pordenone's painting, the resultant overlap suggests the coextensivity of frame and narrative, their inseparability, and thus the impossibility of one to transcend the other. As a result, the viewer is made aware of the ambiguity of these elements in space. This mechanism is not an isolated demonstration, but is variously repeated in Pordenone's scenes[59] and one that asks us to reevaluate, in the words of Michael Podro, "the transition between the actuality of the medium and the represented subject."[60] Put slightly differently, Pordenone's projective illusions elaborate a deceit, that is, the blurring of art and reality, while simultaneously drawing beholders' attention to that deceit. We are encouraged, in effect, to both scrutinize and "imagine away" the distinction between art and reality.[61]

The intrusive effects of Pordenone's compositions complement collective and private meditations on the Passion by encouraging the not-unproblematic sensation of proximity to the sacred space of the narrative and thus the imaginative participation of the devotee in Christ's suffering. But rather than draw beholders out of their spatial and temporal conditions of viewing and into the imagined world beyond the picture frame, Pordenone's scenes assail viewers, invading the space of beholding, or weaving themselves into its fabric. The audacity of such illusionism suggests that the images no longer serve only as aids to meditation, but do something *more*. Indeed, there is an awareness here in the images themselves of a degree of performative excess – that the beholder is not just given meditational cues, but has become the

[59] It also occurs where the bald, spear-wielding enforcer drives the tip of his weapon into the edge of the frame, where Christ clutches the edge of the picture in the *Fall on the Way to Calvary*, where the heel of the bare-legged persecutor crosses the fictive border in *Christ before Pilate*, where Christ's winding cloth drapes over the edge of the fictive stage in the *Lamentation*, and elsewhere. Similar transgressions are often found in the works of Carlo Crivelli or in Luca Signorelli's frescoes in the Cappella Nuova at Orvieto Cathedral (1499-1504), albeit by different means and without the violently projective force of Pordenone's scenes. For an example of the former see his *Ecstasy of the Blessed Gabriele Ferretti* (ca. 1489) at the National Gallery, London, and the discussion by Norman Land, "Carlo Crivelli, Giovanni Bellini, and the Fictional Viewer," *Source*, v. 18, n. 1 (1998), pp. 18-24.
[60] Michael Podro, *Depiction* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 16.
[61] Ibid.

subject of a theatrical illusion.[62] As will be discussed below, the recognition of such sensational artifice is encoded in the pictures, alerting the beholder to the idea of the image as having already incorporated his or her role. The effect is quite distinct from that of the Sacro Monte di Varallo, for example, where the performative role set up for visitors was governed by protocols of replicating Jerusalem and by the perception that its tableaux were the product of "artlessness."[63] By contrast, Pordenone's frescoes at Cremona cathedral require beholders to increasingly assent to the fictions of art. What is remarkable here is that the beholder's awareness of such duplicity does not undermine the impact of the illusion; instead, it appears to sustain it.[64] For in viewing the projecting shaft of Christ's cross (figure 72 and 101) one wonders how far the illusion extends into his or her world and in doing so subscribes to the fiction of its imagined presence and that of the subject it visualizes.

Christ Unmade

A conceivable danger here is that the more one adheres to illusory appearances, the more likely their ultimate significance will be obscured. This point of potential anxiety is insinuated by Pordenone's treatment of Christ, the appearance of whom reveals a fixation on the body as void of redemptive truth. In the scene of Christ's *Fall on the Way to Calvary*, Jesus has collapsed, but not due to the weight of the cross (figure 71). Instead, Christ's tormentors push him to the ground. The force of such violence not only debases Christ, but also seems to undermine his legibility as a coherent body occupying space. The four fingers of his right hand curl around the

[62] On the audience as a fiction see Walter Ong, "The Writer's Audience is Always a Fiction," *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, v. 90, n. 1 (1975), pp. 9-21.
[63] In recounting his experience of the Sacro Monte to his friend Lancino Curzio in a letter of 1507, the humanist Gerolamo Morone explained, "*Ipsa fabricate simplicitas et sine arte structura ingenuusque situs omnem superant antiquitatem*" (the very simplicity of this enterprise, this structure with no art, and the noble site are superior to all antiquity)". Reproduced and translated in Nova, ""Popular" Art in Renaissance Italy...," p. 125 & 320 nt. 47.
[64] Podro, *Depiction*, p. 16.

bottom edge of the picture frame to suggest an encroachment into the space of the beholder, but the rest of Christ's body is lost in a shapeless mass of drapery that appears to dissolve rather than delineate the human form underneath.[65] On hands and knees like an animal, Christ's posture responds to the verse fragments inscribed on the banderols of the Old Testament prophets[66] just below: from Jeremiah 11,19: "*[Et] ego quasi agnus qui portatur ad victimam*" (And I was like a lamb that is brought to the slaughter), and from Isaiah 53,7: "*Sicut ovis ad occasionem duci / tur et no[n] aperiet os suum*" (He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and he shall not open his mouth).[67] Here the analogy between Christ and the sacrificial lamb is expressed in visual terms that literally dehumanize him.

The associative thinking encouraged by the typological relationship constructed between written prophecies and their pictorial fulfillment can be particularly rewarding when the inscribed passages are recollected in their entirety. For example, the prophet located in the spandrel below and to the right of *Christ before Pilate* delivers part of a verse from Lamentations 3,59: *Vidisti D[om]ine iniquitatem / illor[um] adverse[m] me* (Lord, you have seen the wrong done to me) (figure 70). What is excluded from the banderol is the concluding phrase of the verse

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[65] See Cohen, "Pordenone's Cremona Passion Scenes and German Art," p. 76: a "completely unItalian, anti-heroic, unbeautiful figure, lost and weighted down in heavy sagging robes, which are so different from the swift rhythmic patterns that Pordenone could impose upon drapery."

[66] Both Cohen and Smyth have noted that Christ's position in this scene resembles that of an animal and connect it to the inscriptions recorded on the banderoles. For Cohen the Old Testament prophets function as intermediaries. For Smyth, these figures supply the scenes with the authority of prophecy and confer "a cosmic, Christian sense of order to scenes that would be otherwise of an unbearable pain." Cohen, "Pordenone's Cremona Passion Scenes and German Art," p. 79; Smyth, "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes at Cremona Cathedral," pp. 109-111.

[67] Both verses were of particular relevance to the services performed during Holy Week. Isaiah 53:7 and Jeremiah 11:19 were recited in the Mass epistle on Wednesday of Holy Week. The verse from Isaiah was also sung in response to the first and sixth lessons of the Office on Holy Saturday. See James Marrow, *Passion Iconography in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance: A Study of the Transformation of Sacred Metaphor into Descriptive Narrative* (Kortrijk: Van Ghemmert, 1979), pp. 52, 96-97, 163, 291 nt. 404. Of all the verses that adorn the prophets' banderoles under Pordenone's Passion scenes, only the pairing of the prophecies of Isaiah 53:7 and Jeremiah 11:19 under the *Fall on the Way to Calvary* correspond to paired inscriptions in printed editions of the *Biblia pauperum*.

in which Jeremiah humbly entreats the Lord: *judica judicium meum* (judge my cause). For the beholder who recalls the missing supplication in the face of Pordenone's scene of Pilate's abdication of judgment, a host of implications arise, not the least of which being the irrelevance of earthly authority over Christ's fate.[68] In the scene of *Christ Nailed to the Cross* (figure 72), the prophet who grasps the verse fragment *cum manus et peder / eius foderunt impii* (the wicked pierced my hands and my feet) (Ps. 21,17), also extends his right arm to touch the wood of Christ's cross and indicate the pre-drilled hole that will receive the nail driven through Christ's feet (figure 101). The location of the hole is such that it would necessitate an inhuman stretching of Christ's body that would tear his limbs from their joints (and expose his genitals) in order for his feet to reach the hole. In this case, the authorship of the accompanying verse from the Book of Psalms is significant, for the stretching of Christ's body on the cross was often likened to the stretching of the strings of David's harp.[69] Drawn taut like a strand of twisted gut, Christ's body would similarly resonate under the hands of his torturers.

In the scene of his fall (figure 71), Christ's violent transformation – his bestial deportment and amorphous physique – is also suggestive of a previously-overlooked

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[68] Roberto Venturelli has argued that the introduction of prophets under Pordenone's New Testament scenes should be interpreted as an expression of Cremonese anti-Semitism and that the juxtaposition of Hebrew and Christian history should be read in terms of a local desire for segregation. Idem, "Pordenone a Cremona: iconografie, contesti, significati," pp. 5-208.

[69] In the *Speculum humanae salvationis*, for example, the harp-playing David is explicitly posited as a prefiguration of Christ, who was stretched on the cross as the strings of a harp: "*David citharizando praefiguravit Christum, / Quia sicut cordas in cithara, sic in cruce extenderunt ipsum.*" In *Speculum humanae salvationis*, Stiftsbibliothek Kremsmünster, Manuscript Codex 243, comm. Willibrord Neumüller, 2 vols. (Graz: Akadem. Druck- u., 1971) II, ch 25, fol. 30v. The stretching of Christ fulfills the prophecy of Psalm 21,18, but what is even more interesting, as Frederick Pickering has suggested, is how the analogy between Christ and the harp correlates to Psalm 56,9: *Exsurge, gloria mea; exsurge, psalterium et cithara: exsurgam diluculo* (Arise, O my glory, arise psaltery and harp: I will arise early), which is typically associated with Christ's Resurrection. For commentary on Psalm 56,9, see the *Glossa ordinaria,* in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, v. 113, cols. 927-928. For more on the harp as a *figura crucis Christi* see Frederick Pickering, *Literatur und darstellende Kunst im Mittelalter* (Berlin: Schmidt, 1966), pp. 182-192; Marrow, *Passion Iconography in Northern European Art*, pp. 124-125, 163-167; and Tobias A. Kemper, *Die Kreuzigung Christi: Motivgeschichtliche Studien zu lateinischen und deutschen Passionstraktaten des Spätmittelalters* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2006), pp. 288-294.

contractual obligation. Pordenone's contract stipulated that in the scene of Christ's ascent of Mount Calvary, the artist should show:

> "*commo la Madonna lo incontrò cerchandolo et vistolo così smarito et trasfigurato caschò transmortita et sancta Veronica cum lo sudario cum lo quale sugò la facia al redemptore nostro Jesu Christo*"[70]
>
> (how the Madonna encountered him, finding him and seeing him so bewildered and transfigured, she fell senseless and Saint Veronica with the *sudarium* with which she mopped the face of our Redeemer Jesus Christ).

What exactly could the patrons have intended by requesting that Jesus appear "*smarito et trasfigurato*"? The word *smarrito* connotes a vast range of meanings from the sensation of being lost or confused to the decline of an artistic technique, but none of them indicate exultant or elevated qualities.[71] However, there is one example in the Giuntina edition of Vasari's *Vita di Andrea del Sarto* in which the author employs the term to help describe the affective power of a represented figure. In his description of Sarto's *Pitti Pietà* (1523), Vasari writes that one can see:

> "*un dolore estremo nel volto et attitudine della Madonna, la quale vedendo il Cristo, che pare veramente di rilievo in carne e morto, fa per la compassione stare tutto stupefatto e smarrito San Pietro e San Paolo, che contemplano morto il Salvatore del mondo in grembo alla Madre.*"[72]

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[70] Archivio di Stato, Cremona, Notarile Giovan Marco Giberti, f. 797, reproduced by Marubbi, "Regesto dei documenti cinquecenteschi," p. 198.

[71] Dante Alighieri, for example, utilized it to describe a loss of certainty: "*Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita / mi ritrovai per suna selva oscua; / ché la diritta via era smarrita,*" in *La divina commedia*, comm. Giuseppe Villaroel, rev. G. D. Bonino and C. Poma, intro. E. Montale (Milan: Mondadori, 1991), *Inferno*, canto 1, lines 1-3. In the *Vita di Nicola e Giovanni Pisano*, Giorgio Vasari used *smarrito* to describe a decline of artisanal knowledge: "*Fece similmente Nicola in Pisa molti altri palazzi e chiese; e fu il primo, essendosi smarrito il buon modo di fabricar[e], che mise in uso fondar gl'edifizii a Pisa in sui pilastri* [...]." Vasari, *Le Vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, I, pp. 298-299. For the varied nuances of the term *smarrito* see Salvatore Battaglia and Giorgio Barberi Squarotti, eds., *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana* (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1998), XIX, p. 153.

[72] Vasari, *Le Vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, V, p. 38.

(a bitter sorrow in the face and attitude of the Madonna, who, gazing on Christ, who appears [to be] truly in the flesh and dead, through her compassion makes Saint Peter and Saint Paul awed and bewildered as they contemplate the dead savior of the world in the lap of his mother.)

In this passage it is the painted Virgin Mary, rather than Christ, who is endowed with the strange potency to confound other figures through the appearance of her compassion. Without relying too heavily on English cognates, it is clear in this case that *smarrito*, as a quality paired with *stupefatto*, suggests a visually recognizable state of emotional perturbation. Where *smarrito* appears in Pordenone's contract, its presence and proximity to the word *trasfigurato* suggests that we should interpret the latter term to signify an unsettling physical transformation and not the dazzling revelation of Christ's divinity. *Trasfigurato* often appeared in vernacular literature, such as Petrarch's *Canzoniere* and Boccaccio's *Decameron*, to indicate a change in external appearance.[73] And Jacopo Passavanti employed it in *Lo Specchio di vera penitenza* to describe the deceptions of the devil, who "*si trasfigurò in abito, e in figura d'una femmina giovane*" (transfigured himself in the clothes and figure of a young woman).[74]

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[73] Francesco Petrarch, *Canzoniere,* ed. Marco Santagata, 3rd ed. (Milan: Mondadori, 1999) 23, lines 41-48, p. 96: "*Qual mi fec'io quando primer m'accorsi / de la trasfigurata mia persona, / e i capei vidi far di quella fronde / di che sperato avea già lor corona, / e i piedi in ch'io mi stetti, et mossi, et corsi, com'ogni membro a l'anima risponde, diventar due radici sovra l'onde non di Peneo, ma d'un più altero fiume*." The *novella decima* of the second day of Boccaccio's *Decameron* tells of the wife of messer Ricciardo da Chinzica who refuses to recognize her wizen husband in favor of the younger man who had carried her off. Ricciardo's response to her lack of acknowledgement is as follows: "*Deh, cuor del corpo mio, anima mia dolce, speranza mia, or non riconosci tu Ricciardo tuo che t' ama più che sè medesimo? come può questo essere? son io così trasfigurato? deh, occhio mio bello, guatami pure un poco*." Ricciardo's desire to have his wife look upon him for a while, as opposed to conversing with him or smelling him, reinforces the idea of outward physical transformation. Giovanni Boccaccio, *Il Decameron*, ed. Vittore Branca, 2 vols. (Florence: Felice Le Monnier, 1951), I, p. 301 (giornata seconda, novella decima). For more examples see: *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca*, fourth impression, 6 vols. (Florence: Appresso Domenico Maria Manni, 1725-1738), V, p. 136.

[74] Jacopo Passavanti, *Lo specchio di vera penitenza* (first printed 1495), ed. Maria Lenardon (Florence:Libreria Editrice Fiorentine, 1925), capitolo quinto del trattato della superbia, p. 255.

Within the context of Pordenone's fresco, Christ is *trasfigurato* to reveal the deceptiveness of his human veil. The violence enacted against him has rendered him repulsive, emphasizing a tragic and irretrievable fall into base corporeality. Strangely, the effects of extreme physical and mental anguish are not manifested in a single wound or drop of blood, but through a distortion of his human morphology. The loss of pigment cannot account for the ballooning mass of drapery, the swelling hump of his back nor the strange articulation of his right leg and foot, which oddly *points backwards* (figure 102).[75] This constitutes a departure from the empirical naturalism and gruesome desiccations of many German scenes of the Passion. When compared to the lacerated carcass of Matthias Grünewald's *Crucifixion* (1516) from the Isenheim altarpiece, Pordenone's Christ is far removed from the surgical accuracy with which Grünewald makes every wound painfully visible (figure 103). Nor does the pathetic beauty of Christ in Dürer's Passion prints bear a significant resemblance, as Charles Cohen has observed (figure 104).[76] Instead, the partial deformation of Christ's internal structure in Pordenone's painting suggests a disarticulation of his human substance that, in conception, follows a similar trajectory to that found in the works of Albrecht Altdorfer or Jerg Ratgeb in literalizing the vermicular inference of Psalm 21,7: "*Ego autem sum vermis, et non homo; opprobrium hominum, et abjectio plebis*" (But I am a worm and not a man, a reproach of men and despised by the people) (figure 105).[77] As such, the Son of God is lost (*smarrito*) to beholders and yet his painted form is pressed upon them with striking immediacy.

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[75] For the restoration of the frescoes see Guido Botticelli et al., eds., *Il Pordenone e Boccaccio Boccaccino: Primi restauri nella Cattedrale di Cremona* (Poggibonsi: Lalli, 1996); which is a reworking and amplification of the initial reports published by Aldo Cicinelli, Guido Botticelli, and Cristiana Conti, "Il restauro della «Crocifissione» del Pordenone," *Critica d'arte*, v. 56, n. 7 (1991), pp. 59-66.

[76] Cohen, "Pordenone's Cremona Passion Scenes and German Art," p. 77.

[77] Ibid., p. 76, drew attention to conceptual similarities between Pordenone's debased image of Christ and that of Jerg Ratgeb's in the Herrenberger altarpiece (Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie, 1518-19) and Albrecht Altdorfer's in the Saint Florian polyptych (Stift Sankt Florian, ca. 1518). Although it is unlikely that

When Pordenone's unidealized and deformed figure of Christ is compared to those painted by Romanino or Altobello Melone, Pordenone's figure of Jesus is almost haunting in its grotesque otherness (figures 106-109). In Altobello's *Christ before Caiaphas*, the calm and noble beauty of Jesus is contrasted with the vulgar features of the soldiers to invoke the tragic nature of the event. In each of Altobello's scenes, Christ's steadfast resolve in the face of certain death becomes the determining focus that drives the scene's action. Alternatively, the figures that populate Romanino's scenes equivocate the distinction between genuine and feigned empathy for Jesus in a way that mitigates emotional immediacy and tragic pathos in favor of a more ambiguous mode of address. The enigmatic emotional register of Romanino's scenes is perhaps most evident in Christ's *Flagellation* and *Crowning with Thorns*, where the artist minimizes Jesus' vulnerability to suffering in order to stress the pathetic beauty of his passive resistance. Conversely, Pordenone's scenes represent a departure from the strategies employed by both Altobello and Romanino by emphasizing Jesus' suffering and degradation through physical transformation, veristic sensitivity to pain, and, perhaps even more surprisingly, by mitigating the distinction between Christ's vulgar appearance and the deformed physiognomies of his captors.[78]

Within the context of such cruel and unrestrained violence, the lack of difference between Christ and his oppressors does more than simply conceal Christ's divinity: it adds a perverted twist to the Passion. This effect is compounded when we begin to notice how Pordenone juxtaposes the image of Christ's vulgar humanity with examples of base humor. In the scene of *Christ Nailed to the Cross*, Jesus' open

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Pordenone knew these paintings, similar works by Ratgeb or by members of the Danube school circulated widely.

[78] This lack of distinction has been noted in the scholarship, see Cohen, "Pordenone's Cremona Passion Scenes and German Art," p. 77.

mouth is counterpoised with another kind of aperture: the buttocks of the figure to his immediate left (figure 72). In contemplating the end of Christ's earthly sojourn, the viewer is confronted with another "end," the squalid site of bodily evacuation. Just to the left of the baldheaded soldier who dominates the center of the composition, the Virgin Mary is physically restrained by a soldier whose helmet and pauldron are adorned with bat-like wings of demonic connotation. Although it is difficult to see due to the loss of pigment, the soldier's left knee is actually under the Virgin's mantle and between her legs (figure 110). The implied sexual transgression of penetration seems to mock the adjacent penetration of Christ's hand as he is nailed to the cross. The lack of difference between the sacred and the sinful and the perverted mockery of Christ and the Virgin exacerbate the challenge of seeing the truth of Christ's beautiful divinity through the veil of corrupt materiality.

Another foreboding and rather unusual element found among Pordenone's paintings is the inclusion of the swooning Virgin in the scene of Christ's *Fall on the Way to Calvary* (figure 71). While typical of crucifixion scenes, as Pordenone's own fresco of the subject at Cremona attests, the replication of the collapsed form of the Virgin in the scene of Christ's fall reinforces the hopelessness of the situation in a way that is peculiar, but also deliberate: the swooning Virgin was specifically requested for the scene of Christ's ascent to Calvary: "*la Madonna…caschò transmortita*." Notwithstanding the visual tradition in Italy and the copious patristic literature that emphasized the agony that Mary co-suffered on Golgotha, the Virgin's swoon or *spasimo* at the sight of her son's annihilation was denounced by the Church in an official proclamation of 1506.[79] Understood as an expression of the Virgin's

[79] See the discussion of Tommaso Cajetan's *De spasmo gloriossime virginis mariae matris dei* of 1506 in Harvey E. Hamburgh, "The Problem of *Lo Spasimo* of the Virgin in *Cinquecento* Paintings of the Descent from the Cross," *Sixteenth Century Journal*, v. 12, n. 4 (Winter 1981), pp. 45-75. See also

uncontrolled "lower" affectivity, such behavior was deemed inappropriate for the Mother of God. The decision to repeat this motif in the course of the fresco cycle should not be mistaken as an act of defiance, but the persistence of an artistic tradition that testifies to Mary's continued importance as an example of true piety for the faithful. Saint Bonaventure had compared the Virgin's suffering to a second childbearing and explicitly stated that during the crucifixion Mary was "transformed into the likeness of Christ" for "the power of love transforms the lover into the image of the beloved."[80] In Pordenone's painting, the Virgin, transformed in her love of Christ, presents the viewer with the first performance of the *imitatio Christi*.[81]

As a visual correlative for the beholder, the slumped, *unconscious* form of the Virgin suggests that the role images played within devotional exercises of the *imitatio* was more complicated than an appeal for simple mimicry or passive identification with the attitudes of the painted figures. As Augustine reminds us, we must be "*reformemur ad imaginem Dei*" (refashioned after the image of God) for our being made in his likeness is not simply a given but a continuous process of renewal.[82] The essential desideratum of practitioners of the *imitatio* was the restoration of the soul through conformity to Christ, but this process cannot be described as one of passive assimilation.[83] Popular instructional literature such the *Vita Christi Domini Servatoris Nostri* (*ante* 1378, printed 1474) by Ludolphus of Saxony or the *Meditationes vitae*

Amy Neff, "The Pain of *Compassio*: Mary's Labor at the Foot of the Cross," *Art Bulletin*, v. 80, n. 2 (1998), pp. 254-273.

[80] "*Vis amoris amantem in amati similitudinem transformat*," Bonaventure, *Opera omnia***,** 10 vols**.** (Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi): Ex Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1882-1902), IX, p. 695. See Hamburgh's discussion of this passage in "The Problem of *Lo Spasimo*…," p. 55.

[81] Cf. Otto G. von Simson, "*Compassio* and *Co-redemptio* in Roger van der Weyden's Descent from the Cross," *Art Bulletin*, v. 35 (1953), pp. 9-16.

[82] Augustine, *De Trinitate*, bk 7, ch 2.5, in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris: excudebat Migne, 1844-1903), v. 42, col. 938. For a discussion of this passage see Aaron Stalnaker, *Overcoming Our Evil: Human Nature and Spiritual Exercises in Xunzi and Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2006), pp. 104-105.

[83] As cogently argued by Sarah Beckwith, *Christ's Body: Identity, Culture, and Society in Late Medieval Writings* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 60.

Christi (ca.1260/63) of the pseudo-Bonaventure (Giovanni de' Cauli?) provided a series of affective meditations that offered a form of mental reenactment predicated on the reader's imaginative participation in the life of Jesus.[84] Both of these texts invite the reader to cultivate intimacy with Christ during his Passion through graphic descriptions of his physical and emotional torment, the use of the present tense and deictic rhetoric ("see" and "act"), reflections on the fulfillment of prophecy, exclamations of adoration, practical examples, and prayers.[85] Through iterative performance such exercises were intended to help activate the soul's capacity to perceive and refashion the internalized image of its desired perfection and, in doing so, to habitually examine the extent of its likeness to Jesus and the restorative power of his example.[86] Painted representations of the Passion typically served the ends of

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[84] Studies on medieval and early modern Passion devotion that are pertinent to my reading of Pordenone's frescoes include Richard Kiechkefer, "Major Currents in Late Medieval Devotion," in *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation,* ed. Jill Raitt et al., (New York: Crossroad, 1987), pp. 75-108; Giles Constable, "The Ideal of the Imitation of Christ," in *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 143-248; Robert N. Swanson, "Passion and Practice: the Social and Ecclesiastical Implications of Passion Devotion in the Late Middle Ages," in *The Broken Body: Passion Devotion in Late-Medieval Culture*, eds. Alasdair A. MacDonald et al. (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998), pp. 1-30; Michael Camille, "Mimetic Identification and Passion Devotion in the Later Middle Ages: a Double-sided Panel by Meister Franche," in *The Broken Body,* pp. 183-210. For the performative and gender specific dimensions of Passion devotion see Caroline Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: the Religious Significance of Food to Medieval* Woman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); and Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), esp. pp. 86-115. For the *Vita Christi* of Ludolphus see Sister Mary Immaculate Bodenstedt, *The Vita Christi of Ludophus the Carthusian*, Ph.D. diss. Catholic University of America, Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Latin Language and Literature, vol. 16 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University, 1944).

[85] As an example of description and admonition, the following section from Ludolphus' meditation on the crucifixion is paradigmatic: "Our Lord, however, deigned not merely to be extended on the cross. He wanted to be fastened to it to make known to us his faithful love whereby he obtained our salvation. After all the nerves and veins had been strained, and the bones and joints dislocated by the violent extension, he was fastened to the cross. His hands and feet were rudely pierced and wounded by coarse, heavy nails that injured skin and flesh, nerves and veins, and also the ligaments of the bones. […] Through these incentives, spur on your hands and feet to every good work. Because the first man, by extending his hands to the tree of prevarication and by his feet approaching it, made a contract of our condemnation with the devil, our Savior to nullify that contract willed to be fastened, hands and feet, to the tree of the salutary cross by nails of invincible charity, thus cancelling the decree, which was hostile to us. Indeed, he has taken it completely away, nailing it to the cross," *Vita Christi* II, 63, 651b & 653a, translated in Bodenstedt, *The Vita Christi of Ludophus the Carthusian*, p.121. For a more detailed outline of how the meditations were structured see Ibid., pp. 121-130.

[86] Walter Melion has succinctly described the place of images within the processes of spiritual self-evaluation and improvement that such meditations advocate. Idem, "Introduction: Meditative Images and the Psychology of the Soul," in *Image and Imagination of the Religious Self in late Medieval and*

meditation by stimulating recall and by providing a point of departure for mimetic identification. Unlike the Madonna of Sarto's *Pitti Pietà* mentioned above, Pordenone's Virgin does not gaze upon Christ for she is closed off from conscious feeling. Instead, her insensate form complicates the empathetic relationship between the beholder and the beheld for the parallelism between the fallen Christ and the collapsed Virgin is not visualized through emotional conformity. Rather, the conformity is spiritual, a "consubstantiality of souls," to use Reindert Falkenburg's words, that emphases the internalized nature of *imitatio*.[87] At the same time, the Virgin's fall into a state devoid of self-awareness mimics the violent sacrifice of Christ's humanity, reiterating the troubling proposition that the Son of God is lost to beholders.

Fragmentation and Collusion

The assertive presence of Pordenone's disturbingly un-divine Christ is partially undermined by cleverly deployed fragmentations of and continuities between painted bodies. The scenes Pordenone painted above the arches of the nave are littered with disembodied heads, floating hands, and jumbles of apparently self-governing weapons or tools (figures 111). Such confusing fragments emphasize the picture as a plane on which things are imposed rather than as an aperture through which is seen a projecting volume of space. The effect suggests another means by which Pordenone encodes an awareness of the fiction the frescoes seek to overcome by drawing attention away from spatial effects and toward surface logic. Moreover, the odd juxtaposition and overlapping of bodies also has the potential to instigate a temporary

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early Modern Europe, Emory University, Lovis Corinth Colloquia I, eds. Reindert Falkenburg, Walter. S. Melion and Todd M. Richardson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 1-36.

[87] Reindert Falkenburg, "The Household of the Soul: Conformity in the *Merode Triptych*," in *Early Netherlandish Painting at the Crossroads: A Critical Look at Current Methodologies*, ed. Maryan W. Ainsworth (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 2-17 (p. 10).

perceptual blurring between individual forms or the extension of a particular figure's identity. The resultant referential ambiguity makes possible the discovery of new relationships through spatial confusion. For example, in the scene of *Christ before Pilate* there is a strange substitution of one profiled head for another as a helmeted face seems to grow out of the figure seen from behind who drags Jesus away from the tribunal (figure 112).[88] Similarly, the two bearded heads directly above Christ seem to share a single body wrapped in green and yellow drapery (figure 113). In the scene of Christ's *Fall on the Way to Calvary*, it is difficult to distinguish whether Christ's left arm is behind the cross or if it has been absorbed into the folds of Simon of Cyrene's blue garment (figure 114). And in the scene of *Christ's Nailing*, the left-hand arm of the cross is dislocated from the shaft (figure 115). This fracturing of the integrity of the cross is as confusing as it is unusual, although it parallels the adjacent rupture of Christ's bodily integrity by the nail driven into his hand. The blurring and fragmentation of bodies and objects introduces semiotic mutability or the momentary suspension of apperception that engages the viewer by inviting him or her to reevaluate the relation of form to content. By describing such effects I am not making a claim for the artist's originality: Italian paintings since at least the time of Giotto have habituated viewers to reading such fragmented bodies as synecdoche for whole bodies. Instead, I am arguing that we must understand Pordenone's fragmentations, as well as the strange merging of bodies and faces, in terms of a rhetorical purpose.

Each of Pordenone's frescoes maintains a narrative focus that is clearly legible to beholders moving through the nave, yet certain details offer a kind of formal play or game. Pordenone was hardly alone among the artists of his generation who pursued

[88] Smyth, "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes at Cremona Cathedral," p. 108, also noted the confusion between these two figures, but as a means of distinguishing Pordenone's style of composition from Michelangelo's. My interest lies in how the fragmentation and collusion of forms instigate cognitive dissonance.

such effects: Giovanni Battista Armenini distinguished Perugino, Beccafumi and Pontormo as practitioners of such divergent methods, calling them:

> "*novi maestri delle confusioni, perché havend'apena ricevuto il sogetto, si danno a formarlo con l'amucchiar di molte figure senza riguardo de' termini della compositione.*"[89]
>
> (new masters of the confusions, because having scarcely obtained the subject, they give form to it with the piling of many figures without regard for the ends of composition.)

As Philip Sohm has demonstrated, the exploration of unstable forms and fragmented compositions became a popular strategy among *Seicento* painters eager to enhance the expressive potential of their art.[90] Within the context of Cremona cathedral, the confusing fragmentation of spatial coherence and the partial loosening of referential stability complicate viewing, mitigating the instantaneousness of the depicted event. In doing so, such elements generate a disruptive tension that mirrors the chaotic force of violence.

In describing the confounding effects of fragmentation and fusion, the foregoing discussion makes certain assumptions about a process of perception and cognition that can be only tentatively reconstructed. Pre-modern speculation on the human capacity for sensate apprehension of the material world constituted a vast field of competing conceptualizations, but typically turned to Aristotle as its point of

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[89] Giovanni Battista Armenini, *De' veri precetti della pittura* (1587), ed. Marina Gorreri (orig. Publ. Ravenna 1587; Turin: G. Einaudi, 1988), p. 154.

[90] Sohm's discussion of the critical reception of "pathologized piles" in the seventeenth century shows that this compositional strategy delighted the public but was condemned by humanist critics as a symptom of spiritual decay. However, among those who praised the expressive possibilities of fragmented compositions (such as Marco Boschini), Sohm claims that there is some evidence of a desirability for being confused. Unlike the seventeenth-century examples Sohm analyzes, the narrative focus of Pordenone's compositions is never obscured in favor of ancillary details. Idem, "Baroque Piles and Other Decompositions," in *Pictorial Composition from Medieval to Modern Art*, eds. Paul Taylor and François Quiviger, Warburg Institute Colloquia 6 (London: Warburg Institute, 2000), pp. 58-90.

departure.[91] Explorations into faculty psychology, which drew most notably on *De anima* and *Parva naturalia,* attempted to organize the different human senses into a comprehensive system of cosmologically ordered hierarchy.[92] The question that occupied most authors addressed how the various faculties of the mind mediated the transition from sense perception to abstract thought.[93] What is of interest in this case is the role that judgment plays within the postsensory and prerational faculties of soul. Accounts of perception and the corresponding acts of synthesis reveal that each internal sense exercised powers of discrimination.[94] Drawing on a medieval Latin

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[91] Such speculation also borrowed freely from Arabic-Aristotelian, Neoplatonic, and Galenic views of the senses. Aristotle's position was predicated on the belief that all knowledge has its starting point in sensation. His attribution of internalized functions to the apprehension of external sense were developed and expanded by early Christian and medieval commentators into the distinct "internal senses" of the soul. My understanding of early modern faculty psychology stems from Katherine Park, "The Concept of Psychology," in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, eds. Charles B. Schmitt et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 455-463; Idem, "The Organic Soul," in *The Cambridge History*…, pp. 464-484; Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: a Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. pp. 46-60; Idem, "Thinking in Images: the Spatial and Visual Requirements of Cognition and Recollection in Medieval Psychology," in *Signs and Symbols*, Proceedings of the 2006 Harlaxton Symposium, eds. John Cherry and Ann Payne (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2009), pp. 1-17; and the various essays in Stephen G. Nichols et al., eds., *Rethinking the Medieval Senses: Heritage, Fascinations, Frames* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

[92] It is worth noting that there is some early evidence (thirteenth century) of Cremonese interest in faculty psychology. As Biondo Flavio records in his *Italia Illustrata*: "*Habuit quoque Gerardum Sablonetum excellentem physicum, et astronomum, qui Chaldaeas Graecasque, sicut et Latinas edoctus litteras Avicennae et Rasis, sive Almansoris libros, qui nunc Latine leguntur, transtuli ex Arabico*…" (This city also boasts of Gerard [Sabbioneta] of Cremona, the excellent physicist/naturalist and astronomer, learned in Chaldaean and Greek as well as in Latin: he translated from the Arabic the books of Avicenna and Rasi or Alamansor, which can now be read in Latin)." See Catherine J. Castner, *Biondo Flavio's Italia Illustrata: Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Binghampton, NY: Global Academic, 2005), pp. 116-117.

[93] See Han Ulrich Gumbrecht, "Introduction," in *Rethinking the Medieval Senses,* p. 1-10. The operations of these faculties were understood to liberate signs from sense perception, for as Saint Augustine most famously defined it, a sign "is a thing which causes us to think of something beyond the impression the thing itself makes upon the senses." This "something" was the internalized image that could be amended and recomposed in the service of higher cognitive processes. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. D. W. Robertson (New York: Macmillan, 1958), bk 2, ch 1.1, p. 34. See Jack Greenstein's discussion of this passage in "On Alberti's "Sign": Vision and Composition in Quattrocento Painting," *Art Bulletin*, v. 79 (1997), pp. 669-698, esp. p. 680.

[94] For example, Katherine Park's explication of the popular textbook *Margarita philosophica (Philosophic Pearl)* written in the 1490s by Gregor Reisch defines the functions as follows: the common sense compared and contrasted similar species (sense images), discriminating according to differences like size, shape, number, etc.; the imagination collected the images from the common sense and stored them for further elaboration by the fantasy, which, in turn, composed new intelligible images (*phantasmata*) from the species derived from the other faculties; estimation involved instinctual judgments of truth and falsehood; and memory accumulated and saved all the images, both externally derived and internally contrived, and the various judgments conducted by estimation. See Park, "The Organic Soul," pp. 470-73.

translation of Aristotle's *De anima* and Roberto Grosseteste's translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, David Summers observes that "*iudicium* may refer to a broad range of kinds of right discriminations, from the operations of sense to moral decision" but that "[i]t always means to discern or distinguish in relation to a mean or standard."[95] The mean or standard against which all sensate phenomena were weighed was the product of cumulative judgments, which were always developing through a process of correction based on affirmative and negative propositions.[96] It is precisely this process of recognition and discrimination or the application of a flexible adjudicating principle to sensate data that Pordenone's pictures could be said complicate. The fragmentations, transgressions and projections of the artist's Cremona frescoes suggest a distention among the acts of synthesis or a brief destabilization of a standard by inserting a question mark into the processes of perception and cognition.

This is not to suggest that Pordenone's compositions produce the effects of multistable perceptual phenomena (like the ambiguous image of the duck-rabbit[97]). Instead, certain details temporarily confound visual judgment by withholding information and resisting closure. The resistance to intelligibility that such details present is suggestive of what Wolfgang Kemp has described as "places of indeterminacy" or "blanks": concepts that operate on the premise that incompleteness functions as a means of activating interactions between the beholder's imagination and the work of art.[98] The withholding of visual information is "an essential condition

[95] Summers, *The Judgment of Sense*, pp. 22-23.
[96] Ibid., pp. 184-187. See also Ernst Gombrich on the necessity of schema and correction in Idem, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*, The A.W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Bollingen Series 35: 5 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1960), pp. 87-90.
[97] For the classic interpretation of this image and a discussion of the psychological complexity of such an illusion see the introduction to Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, p. 2.
[98] Wolfgang Kemp, "Death at Work: A Case Study on Constitutive Blanks in Nineteenth-Century Painting," trans. Raymond Meyer, *Representations*, n. 10 (Spring 1985), pp. 102-123 (pp. 107-117).

for communication" and can either facilitate or impede the coherence of a painting's constitutive elements.[99] The obstruction of pictorial coherence by indeterminate compositional relationships or forms, i.e. "blanks," does not arrest a work of art's capacity to signify, but confronts the beholder with a network of referential trajectories. Likewise, the competing elements of rupture and unintelligibility found in Pordenone's compositions do not testify to a failed *istoria*, but ask us to project completion where ellipsis or occlusion has baited us with suggestions.

By asking the viewer to question – if only for a moment – what a particular motif signifies and how it signifies, Pordenone's paintings remind viewers of their role in the process of signification. The artist's prodigious artifice activates the emotive power of the illusions, while the fragmentation, doubling, or mirroring of bodies complicate their effect with passages of referential indeterminacy that call attention to the limits of carnal vision. In other words, each of Pordenone's painting offers an undeniable appeal to the senses while simultaneously indicating the inadequacy of relying on them. In fact, the special force of these frescoes seems to derive from the tension activated by compounding the direct, psychological affectivity of projective illusionism with the referentially evasive motifs that frustrate straightforward communication. Coupled with Christ's uncomely appearance, the tension of this dynamic complicates the challenge to see beyond material appearances to the mystery hidden in the merciless persecution of the narrative's protagonist.

"An object lesson in spiritual blindness"[100]

This challenge is turned into an explicit command in the *Crucifixion* scene (figure 73). Directly above what was at the time the layman's only exit from the cathedral, the figure of a Centurion assumes a pose that approximates the crossed legs

[99] Ibid., p. 108.
[100] Parshall, "Penitence and *Pentimenti*: Hieronymus Bosch's *Mocking of Christ* in London," p. 376

and outstretched arms of the crucified Savior.[101] In the most loaded gesture of the entire cycle, the Centurion's extended left arm directs the viewers' gaze upward to the dead figure of Christ. As is often noted, the demonstrative nature of this gesture identifies the soldier as the Good Centurion who announced Christ's divinity in the gospel narrative: "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Matthew 27,54). Granted a counterintuitive perception that went against all visible evidence, the Good Centurion's pointing gesture testifies to the truth of his miraculous insight and admonishes one to see, making the beholder acutely aware of his or her own acts of perception and the impossible task that it demands: that is, to bypass reliance on the very senses from which the possibility of spiritual apprehension is first aroused.[102] The question that remains is *how*?

Dead upon the cross, Christ, the subject of the violence just committed, has become the object of contemplation. For the first time in the nave cycle, some of the faces of Christ's oppressors signal his divinity with clear expressions of fear, awe, and reverence. As Carolyn Smyth has noted, the scene's spatial logic is undermined by a trajectory that extends upward from the sword of the Centurion into the lance of Longinus which, in turn, traces a line to the Good Thief, whose desiring gaze is

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[101] As noted above, the two auxiliary doors flanking the central portal were not added to the facade until 1569.

[102] For the didactic instrumentality of such gestures in the religious works of early sixteenth-century painters in northern Europe see Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image*, pp. 191-200, 226-238. Perhaps the best known section of the Corpus Domini liturgy is the *Lauda, sion* sequence of the mass. As Miri Rubin has observed, it was often chanted at Eucharistic processions and during the course of processions for the blessing of fields. The chant's explanation of communion reiterates for listeners the test of faith posed by the sacrament of the Eucharist, which, like Pordenone's fresco, asks worshippers to transcend appearances to the hidden truth: "*Quod in carnem transit panis, / Et vinum in sanguinem. / Quod non capis, quod non vides, / Animosa firmat fides, / Praeter rerum ordinem. / Sub diversis speciebus, / Signis tantum, et non rebus, / Latent res eximiae. / Caro cibus, sanguis potus: / Manet tamen Christus totus, / Sub utraque specie* (Bread into flesh converted, / Into blood the holy wine: / Sight and intellect ascending, / Nature's laws to marvel bending, / 'Tis confirmed by faith divine. / Under either kind remaining, / Form, not substance, still retaining, / Wondrous things our spirit sees: / Flesh and blood thy palate staining, / Yet still Christ entire remaining, / Under either species)," *The New Roman Missal in Latin and English*, eds. Francis Xavier Lasance and Francis Augustine Walsh (New York; Boston: Benziger brothers, 1945), pp. 637-638. Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 191-193.

riveted on the Crucified Savior.[103] The diagonal that connects the three figures and the striking fervency of their reactions to Christ's lifeless form helps to distinguish them as examples of what Smyth calls "the metaphor of revelation by ocular experience."[104] I believe this claim can be extended further by looking at how their actions suggest a means of acquiring this revelation. Sitting astride his horse, Longinus has placed his hand over his heart (figure 116). As Joseph Koerner has argued, such a gesture suggests that revelation by ocular experience is also an embodied process of interiorized co-experience and that the real image of Christ's dual nature is not painted on the walls of the church but on the hearts of the desiring faithful.[105] Looking back at the Good Centurion, one realizes that this exemplar of Christian vision does not look at the crucified Christ nor at the viewer, but up and outward, across the viewers' space and down the nave to the image of Christ's divine majesty painted in the apse.

High above the rood screen that once divided the liturgical spaces of the cathedral, Boccaccio Boccaccino's *Pantocrator with Saints* (1506-1507) presides over the presbytery (figure 82). Floating before a golden background, the frontally posed Redeemer is detached from time and space, existing somewhere "beyond" in the transcendental imaginary. In light of the way the Centurion responds to Boccaccino's fresco, one might read the interaction between the figures of the two scenes as thematizing the ascendant process of Christian vision. For in practicing devotion, the faithful beholders' emotions are aroused like Longinus' by Christ's sensible form.

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[103] Smyth, "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes at Cremona Cathedral," p. 115.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image*, pp. 165, 226-32. The idea that Christ paints his image on the hearts of the devout was a standard part of medieval instructional literature on the use of images in devotion. For examples see Jeffrey Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998), p. 398; Gerhard Wolf, "Christ in His Beauty and Pain: Concepts of Body and Image in an Age of Transition (Late Middle Ages and Renaissance)," in *The Art of Interpreting*, ed. Susan C. Scott (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 1995), pp. 164-197.

Yet, by virtue of that form's lack of resemblance or dissimilarity to its referent, beholders, spurred by their love of Christ, are encouraged to look elsewhere, beyond the physical aspect, so that they, like the Good Centurion, might come closer to the invisible divine.[106]

In their coarse physicality, assertive illusionism, and confusing fragmentation, the artfully managed effects of spatial incoherence and referential ambiguity generated by Pordenone's scenes of Christ's Passion present an old problem in a new light. Through such means the artist brings a new urgency to the faithful viewer's accountability, magnifying the demands of Christian vision to provide what Peter Parshall has called "an object lesson in spiritual blindness."[107] The lesson is made visually explicit through the crack that rends the foreground of the *Crucifixion* and splits the composition into two opposing camps: those who see with the eyes of the soul and those limited to corporeal vision (figures 73 and 100). In noting how the division of the composition is reminiscent of scenes of the Last Judgment, Smyth has claimed that on leaving the church the laity was left with Christ's death and the question of locating one's "spiritual place."[108] It is critically important to recognize

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[106] A local expression of the desire for raising human intellects in contemplation of the divine may be found in the *Rubrica de le oratione* included in the 1496 statutes of the lay confraternity of the *Disciplini di Christo flagellato* at the church of Santi Gervasio e Protasio, Cremona:
"*O beata visione, o beata letitia, o luce eterna del Redemptore nostro benignissimo et dulcissimo, che gratia et che dono è questo che tu ne fai, di poter parlare cum lo signore nostro stando in questa terra et carcere obscura di questa nostra carne, prevenendo il nostro intellecto ad tuti quanti li cieli et le Schiere de li Sancti Angeli et archangeli, troni et dominatione, virtute, principati et potestate, Cherubini et serafini, arivando noi cum contemplante amore, cum li intellecti humani … a la luce superna dove tu stai, xpo iesu, nostro Redentore*"
(Oh blessed vision, oh blessed joy, oh eternal light of our most benign and sweet Redeemer! This grace and this gift is this which you give to us: to be able to speak with our lord on this earth and in this obscure prison of our flesh, anticipating our intellect to each and all the skies and the hosts of holy angels and archangels, thrones and lordship, virtue, principalities and power, cherubim and seraphim, we arrive with contemplative love, with human intellects … to the celestial light where you are, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.) Italian transcribed in Andrea Foglia, "Istituzioni ecclesiastiche e vita religiosa dagli inizi del XV secolo al 1523," in *Storia di Cremona. Il Quattrocento Cremona nel Ducato di Milano*, pp. 162-201 (p. 199).

[107] Parshall, "Penitence and *Pentimenti*: Hieronymus Bosch's *Mocking of Christ* in London," p. 376.

[108] Smyth, "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes at Cremona Cathedral," p.116. This claim develops from Smyth's dismissal of the *Lamentation* (1522) and Bernardino Gatti's *Resurrection* (1529) as later, separate projects. Her assumption is based on Alessandro Nova's correction of Giulio Bora's claim that

that the question of spiritual self-examination that this image poses is uncomfortable, if not traumatic, precisely because it is impossible to answer: it is impossible to know the condition of one's soul with any certainty.[109] The rift that splits the composition widens as it reaches the bottom, suggesting its continuation and encapsulation of the door and the space of the viewers below. The painting, in effect, defines the viewers' location as the nebulous "non-place" or negative space of the crack itself. It follows then, that if the painting asks the laity to consider their spiritual place, it also reminds them of the uncertainty of the answer.

Lux and *Lamentation*

Mitchell Merback, in a study on the shared phenomenology of human suffering, demonstrated how bodily anguish acquired the positive force of "redemptive instrumentality" in late medieval religious culture and could function as an important generator of *communitas*.[110] This concept found its origins in Christ's personal sacrifice, which offered the promise of salvation to a new community that shared in his experience as compassionate witnesses and strengthened their bonds through the spectacle of his annihilation. The camaraderie of collective suffering is

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the patrons had intended to conclude the cycle with scenes of Christ's Resurrection and the Assumption of the Virgin from the beginning and that such scenes had been assigned to Romanino on 31 December 1519. Nova has shown that the document in question does not, in fact, refer to Romanino, but to scaffold-makers and that mention of the Resurrection and Assumption does not refer to desired paintings but to feast days, which the *massari* designated as the start and end dates for the construction of scaffolding. Nova, *Girolamo Romanino*, pp. 233-234. While Pordenone's *Lamentation* is not mentioned in the surviving redactions of the artist's contract, Cohen has noted that the top of the painted frame includes a fictive tablet with the date 1521, obscured by the late seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century frame of the *Crucifixion*. Given the location of the date, it is hard to assume it commemorates the completion of the fresco, especially since the artist continued to receive payments until at least 30 December 1522. Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, II, pp. 580-581. I believe the *Lamentation* could have easily followed the *Crucifixion* without delay and its inclusion does not alter the doleful note upon which the cycle ended.

[109] The anxiety that attends self-examination was also reinforced by the *Lauda, sion* sequence of the Corpus Domini liturgy as it stresses the necessity of worthy reception for effective benefit: "*Sumunt boni, sumunt mali: / Sorte tamen inaequali / Vitae, vel interitus. / Mors est malis, vita bonis: / Vide paris sumptionis / Quam sit dispar exitus* (Both to good and bad 'tis broken, / But on each a different token / Or to life, or death attends: / Life to good, to bad damnation; / Lo, of one same manducation / How dissimilar the ends)," *The New Roman Missal in Latin and English*, p. 638.

[110] Mitchell Merback, *The Thief, the Cross and the Wheel: Pain and the Spectacle of Punishment in Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), p. 20.

offered to the beholder in Pordenone's *Lamentation* scene, where Nicodemus(?) meets the viewer's gaze and gestures for him/her to join the first community of believers surrounding the powerfully foreshortened body of Christ, a body propitiously located at the viewer's eye level (figure 74). It is here, with the image of the fallen Savior, that Pordenone presents the beholder with the cycle's most persuasive application of projective illusionism. The entire scene has been removed from an historic setting and reconceptualized as a timeless event that places the drama of human existence within the austere marble confines of a fictive niche that recalls the settings of Giovanni Bellini's *San Giobbe* (ca.1480) and *San Zaccaria* (1505) altarpieces as well as Sebastiano del Piombo's organ shutters (ca.1508) for San Bartolomeo a Rialto (figures 117, 118, 119). With nothing but his head propped up to reveal a face petrified in misery, Christ's position and comportment defy all suggestion of an hierarchical arrangement and reveal nothing of a somnolent will or latent animation. The heavy musculature of his nude form is not imbued with the rhetoric of heroic triumph and the mystical significance of his dual nature is mitigated by the pathetic spectacle of his prostrate, earthly body.

In the absence of mediating prophets to reaffirm and legitimize the truth of the represented mystery, Pordenone reformulated the dynamic of prefiguration and fulfillment by introducing a pictorial typology with the scene of *Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac* located in the fictive vault of the aedicule. The journey to Mount Moriah brought about God's covenant with Abraham, just as the ascent of Golgotha sealed the new covenant under grace, the effectiveness of which was guaranteed by Christ's death.[111] As a willing sacrificial victim, Isaac is often seen to prefigure Jesus, for whom no act of substitution could save. In Pordenone's fresco, the test of faith by

[111] For an extended discussion on the typological relationship between the sacrifice of Isaac and the sacrifice of Christ see Cleo McNelly Kearns, *The Virgin Mary, Monotheism, and Sacrifice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 75-97 & 137.

which the old covenant was established – a test communicated through the twice-removed fiction of feigned mosaic – is both abrogated through Christ's supplanting of the sacrificial ram (absent from the scene above) and reconfigured: Abraham's outward demonstration of belief and servility through blood shedding has become, through Christ's seemingly lifeless body, an interiorized test of obedience and love of God for the beholder. The question of faith demanded of the viewer in the *Crucifixion* scene is here brought into intimate proximity with the beholder and rephrased to encourage reflection on the sustained grief of the mourners and the delicate vulnerability of a body that is now literally within reach of the beholder.

A period of seven years transpired before a pendant to Pordenone's *Lamentation* was painted on the opposite side of the cathedral's *portone*: Bernardino Gatti's *Resurrection* (figure 120). During that time, the laity was left with a series of paintings that framed the question of belief in particularly unsettling, even desperate terms. However, indication of the impending reanimation of the *Lux Mundi* (John 8:12) was not absent from the cycle. Following the gaze of the centrally-placed Magdalene, the spectator is led to one of the great ironies of Christian symbolism: the peacock.[112] The incorruptibility of the bird's dead flesh was a marvel of nature, one that Augustine could only explain by recourse to the divine: "For who if not God, the creator of all things, has granted to the flesh of the dead peacock immunity from decay?"[113] The supposed resistance of the peacock to putrefaction made it a potent symbol of immortality and figurative shorthand for the eternal nature of Christ. However, what is important in this case is not simply what the bird represents, but how it is represented. The amount of attention applied to the articulation of the bird's body and the impression of depth and weight divorce it from the flattened forms and

[112] See Réau, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien,* I, pp. 83-84.
[113] "*Quis enim nisi Deus creator omnium dedit carni pavonis mortui ne putesceret?*," Augustine, *The City of God Against the Pagans*, VII, bk. 21, ch. 4, pp. 14-15.

cursory handling of the adjoining Old Testament scene and suggests that it belongs to the same level of pictorial reality as the mourning figures below. At the same time, there is something radically aberrant about this bird: while the entire scene is lit consistently from left to right in conformity with the actual lighting in the church, the peacock, whose highlights agree with the direction of that illumination, casts its shadow *to the left*. Depending on the angle at which one imagines the light to enter the scene, the incongruous shadow might be poorly defended as the result of an artistic play on the reflective quality of the golden mosaic in the fictive vault. However, the hard contours and density of the silhouette are conspicuously unlike the shadows that appear elsewhere in Pordenone's frescoes. This suggests that there is something more at stake here than the musings of an optically-astute painter. Lacking depth and color, the peacock's spurious doppelganger is incomplete, a dark foreshadowing of itself. The transition from the shadowy semblance on the left to the fully realized and resplendent image of the peacock on the right invokes a pictorial metaphor first advanced by Saint Paul when he confirmed the insufficiency of the Old Testament, "Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the true form of these realities."[114] As Thomas Dale and Herbert Kessler have shown, this metaphor was elaborated by Alcuin of York and Walfrid Strabo of Fulda to describe the process of doctrinal supersession as the completion of a shadowy under-drawing with colors.[115] The means by which Pordenone's fresco activates this metaphor does not depend on the accommodation of the actual lighting of the cathedral, but on the empowering of pictorial lighting with its own independent existence, one that emanates from within the space of the fictive vault to project the peacock's shadow in

[114] "*Umbram enim habens lex futurorum bonorum, non ipsam imaginem rerum*" (Hebrews 10:1).
[115] Dale, *Relics, Prayers and Politics in Medieval Venetia,* p. 76; and Herbert Kessler, ""Hoc Visibile Imaginatum Figurat Illud Invisibile Verum": Imagining God in Pictures of Christ," in *Seeing the Invisible in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, eds. Giselle de Nie et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 291-325, esp. p. 296.

deliberate contradistinction to the naturalism governing the rest of the scene. In doing so, the artist not only visualizes the abjuration of the Old Law but imbues the painting with the presence of a light that defies reason and illuminates from within. In a striking reversal of expectations, it is through immortality's negative image (the peacock's shadow) that the artist suggests the ineffable presence of divine radiance. By embellishing the atmosphere surrounding Christ's recumbent body with anomalous effulgence, the artist imbues the unvarnished reality of death with a sanctifying luminosity that discloses the truth of Christ's divinity.

A Question of Disposition

In attempting to account for the open-ended nature of Pordenone's frescoes, Smyth suggested that the paintings reflect a context of lively religious debate engendered by the absence of Bishop Girolamo Trevisano from Cremona during the years of the cathedral's nave decoration.[116] As a Venetian patrician, Trevisano had taken leave of the city following the Battle of Agnadello and his absence is said to have encouraged the already active cultivation of the *fabbriceria's* jurisdiction over the cathedral.[117] It is Smyth's contention that under the guiding yoke of a bishop "the

[116] Smyth, "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes at Cremona Cathedral," p. 117.

[117] The *fabbriceria* had always played a determining role in the administration of local religious life and the space of the cathedral is often characterized as a propagandistic venue for the beleaguered local government. In general, the Cremonese appear to have had a certain penchant for memorializing their oppression within a religious context. In 1516, Matteo Fossa penned his *Pater Noster of the Lombards*, in which he inserted a social protest against French oppression among the lines of the conventional prayer. In the cathedral itself, the *massari* commemorated their resolve in the face of hardship with an inscription located on the wall above Pordenone's *Christ before Pilate*: "GALLIS AFFLICTA ELVECIIS MULCATA / PESTE DEBILIS FAME DEFORMIS / P. P. ANNO MDXII A DIVINO / TAMEN CULTU NUMQUAM DEFLESCIT (The French having been afflicted with the plague were weakened, the Swiss having been malnourished with famine were impaired, the people never lamented in their worship and placed this in the year 1512 of our Lord). For the inscription see Grandi, *Descrizione dello stato*, I, p. 695, nt. 2. For narratives of early sixteenth-century Cremonese religious history that tend to emphasize the various manifestations of dysfunction brought on by plague, pogrom, political oppression and the absence of a residing bishop see Giancarlo Bosio, "Tensioni religiose ed impulsi riformistici dall'inizio del sec. XV al concilio di Trento," in *Diocesi di Cremona*, eds. Adriano Caprioli et al. (Brescia: La Scuola, 1998), pp. 121-168; and Foglia, "Istituzioni ecclesiastiche e vita religiosa dagli inizi del XV secolo al 1523," pp. 162-201. For a transcription of the *Pater Noster of the Lombards* and an attribution to Fossa see Bonetti, *Cremona durante le guerre di predominio straniero…,* pp. 240-242; and Francesco Novati, "Una poesia politica del Cinquecento: Il Pater Noster dei Lombardi," *Giornale Filologico Romano*, n. 2 (1879), pp. 1-32.

viewer would be told to think and to submit to institutional rule and mediating guidance," but that in a context of spiritual unrest, the absence of such guidance made the questioning of one's personal faith a matter of particular urgency for the *massari*.[118] This claim demands qualification. While the *fabbriceria* did exert an exceptional amount of control over the administration, maintenance, and decoration of the cathedral, the bishop's rule over the diocese was mediated by his vicars.[119] As Giancarlo Bosio has shown, Bishop Trevisano was particularly concerned with the personal conviction and adherence of the members of his diocese to orthodox belief.[120] Towards the end of his episcopate (1520-22), Trevisano directed Cosmo Fava, the vicar general, to conduct a pastoral visit that departed from conventional evaluations of the clergy.[121] Unlike past inspections in which the personal faith of the examinee was taken for granted, here, for the first time, the examination not only included an assessment of the clergy's knowledge of the articles of faith, but also questions designed to reveal one's level of personal adhesion to them and the exaction of an explicit profession of faith.[122] The added stipulations of the *Visita Trevisano* might be interpreted as a sign of the bishop's apprehension regarding the spread of heterodox beliefs in his diocese, and while the results of the visit reveal that the majority of parish priests were approved without reserve, the situation was hardly acceptable: among the thirty-nine priests presiding over the cathedral, twenty-four were commended without hesitation, four were given warnings, one was suspended

[118] Smyth, "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes at Cremona Cathedral," p. 117.
[119] Bosio da Dovara was nominated vicar by Leo X with a bull of 2 September 1514, Luca Seriago (or Seriate) held the office from 1515-1519, and Cosma Fava, canon of Torcello, was nominated vicar in 1519. See Bosio, "Tensioni religiose ed impulsi riformistici dall'inizio del sec. XV al concilio di Trento," p. 152.
[120] Ibid., pp. 151-155, 164 nt. 99.
[121] The acts of the visit conducted by Fava may be found at the Archivio della Curia vescovile di Cremona, Visite, 2 (*Visita Trevisano*). For more information see Corsi and Foglia, *Vita religiosa a Cremona nel Cinquecento*, p. 32; and Bosio, "Tensioni religiose ed impulsi riformistici," pp. 151-155.
[122] Bosio, "Tensioni religiose ed impulsi riformistici" p. 153.

but allowed re-admittance, four were found to have taken in concubines, and seven were suspended from celebrating Mass on account of their ignorance of the rites.[123]

These results suggest the difficulty one faces in trying to calculate the level of diocesan control over the spiritual guidance of the laity during the period of Pordenone's stay in Cremona. What is clear, however, is that the subjective participation that the frescoes solicit bears witness to a larger historical phenomenon that privileged the viewer's role in the pictorial communication of meaning. This does not mean that Pordenone's experiments attempted to obviate the need for institutional mediation or encouraged heterodox beliefs. The dramatic immediacy and direct psychological appeal of these frescoes suggest the possibility of a personal and tangible sensation of contact with Christ, but this sensation is placed in tension with the distancing effects engendered by the viewer's awareness of the frame and the fragmentation of secondary motifs.

In the decades prior to the Diet of Regensburg and the Council of Trent, there was no codified Catholic visual vocabulary in Italy and the question of an artwork's relative orthodoxy or heterodoxy was often as subjective as the individual beholder's religious sympathies. Early sixteenth-century Cremona is typically defined as a "hotbed of Lutheran propaganda," but the religious identities of the Cremonese could hardly be defined as fixed or completed and there is significant evidence of aggressive orthodoxy, evidence that continues to reveal the complexity of the situation and the impossibility of locating Pordenone's paintings under a single designation.[124]

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[123] Ibid., p. 155. Bosio also records that the city suffered a papal interdict in 1522 (p. 152).

[124] For the quotation see Cohen, "Pordenone's Cremona Passion Scenes and German Art," p. 94. For the impossibility of situating individuals within rigid religious categories see John Martin, "Spiritual Journeys and the fashioning of religious identity in Renaissance Venice," *Renaissance Studies*, v. 10, n. 3 (1996), pp. 358-370. For heterodoxy in sixteenth-century Cremona see Chabod, "Per la storia religiosa dello Stato di Milano durante il dominio di Carlo V. Note e documenti," pp. 357-361; Bosio, "Tensioni religiose ed impulsi riformistici," pp. 121-168; and Foglia, "Istituzioni ecclesiastiche e vita religiosa dagli inizi del XV secolo al 1523," pp. 162-201. For an attempt to situate Pordenone within a

In the year prior to the artist's arrival in the city, the theologian Isidoro Isolani, residing at the convent of San Domenico, published the first unofficial Italian response to the Lutheran question: the *Revocatio Martini Lutheri Augustiniani ad sanctam sedem* (November 1519, dedicated to Girolamo Trevisano).[125] Often cited as evidence of the precocious spread of Lutheran ideas to Cremona and of the city's status as a center of reform debate, Isolani's *Revocatio* is first and foremost a powerful statement of orthodoxy and allegiance to the papacy in a town whose religious sympathies would become increasingly difficult to define in the following decade. The *Revocatio* attempts to draw attention to the errors of Luther's propositions and to implore the Augustinian to renew his fidelity to the Holy See.[126] Unfortunately, the treatise offers little by way of sustained doctrinal discussion and much of the gravity of Luther's arguments is lost on Isolani.[127] The first and most theoretical of the treatise's ten *persuasiones*, entitled *Cogit tuus error ignotus*, does not present a reasoned refutation so much as a collection of citations from the Church Fathers, Aquinas, Pietro Lombardo, Bonaventure, Dun Scotus, and others.[128] As

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circle of reformist patronage see Maria Calì, "Patroni, committenti, amici del Pordenone fra religione e storia," pp. 93-101

[125] The *Revocatio* was published with the approval of Trevisano's vicar, Cosmos Fava, and the vicar of the inquisitor, Pietro Martire da Lodi, just before Fava commenced his pastoral visit. See Corsi and Foglia, *Vita religiosa a Cremona nel Cinquecento*, p. 126.

[126] The most extensive evaluation of Isolani's treatise remains Nansen Defendi, "La «Revocatio M. Lutherii ad S. Sedem» nella polemica antiluterana in Italia," *Archivio storico lombardo*, v. 80 (1953), pp. 69-132.

[127] Luther had the following to say about Isolani in 1520: "A certain Italian friar of Cremona has written a "Recantation of Martin Luther before the Holy See," which is not that I revoke anything, as the words declare, but that he revokes me. This is the kind of Latin that the Italians are beginning to write nowadays." "Of the Italian friar of Cremona I shall say nothing. He is an unlearned man and a simpleton, who attempts with a few rhetorical passages to recall me to the Holy See, from which I am not as yet aware of having departed, nor has anyone proved that I have. His chief argument in those silly passages is that I ought to be moved by my monastic vows and by the fact that the empire has been transferred to the Germans. Thus he does not seem to have wanted to write my "recantation" so much as the praise of the French People and the Roman pontiff. Let him attest his allegiance in this book, such as it is. He does not deserve to be harshly treated, for he seems to have been prompted by no malice; nor does he deserve to be learnedly refuted, since all his chatter is sheer ignorance and inexperience." See Martin Luther, "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," in *Three Treatises from the American Edition of Luther's Works*, trans. A.T.W. Steinhäuser, revised F.C. Ahrens and A.R. Wentz, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), pp. 125 & 131-132.

[128] Titled "*Cogit tuus tibi error ignotus*" in the 1520 version.

Nansen Defendi has shown, Isolani employed these citations for their paternity and conformity with the beliefs of the Church, appealing to the historical weight of their words – as opposed to a careful explication of their meaning – to persuade Luther to recognize the intellectual "sickness" that has overcome him.[129] In fact, Isolani devoted a significant portion of his text to diagnosing the "*triplici egritudine*" that afflicted Luther: edema of pride, ophthalmia that obscured the clarity of his vision, and a weak stomach that kept him from digesting good books properly.[130]

What is interesting about Isolani's *Revocatio* is the Dominican's insistence on the importance of the *habitus*, that is, an innate and acquired interior quality or disposition of the soul that compels action. Isolani wished to call attention to what he believed was a contradiction in Luther's understanding of the term. Luther rejected the Thomist conception of the *habitus* because it indicated that man needed the intermediaries of grace, i.e. the sacraments. For Aquinas, the introduction of grace effects a permanent change in the devout, instantiating a *habitus*, but the faithful also need additional assistance in the form of the sacraments so that through such external acts they may habitually grow in their understanding of God's grace and become more like the object of their devotion.[131] Luther could not accept this definition of the *habitus* for it complicated his distinction between true repentance and sacramental penance. For Luther, Christ's command "*poenitentiam agite*" (repent) could not be accomplished through institutionally mediated acts such as confession and satisfaction.[132] Instead, true repentance consisted of a change in one's heart,

[129] Defendi, "La «Revocatio M. Lutherii ad S. Sedem»," pp.121-122.
[130] Isidoro Isolani, *Revocatio Martini Lutherij Augustiniani ad sanctam Sedem* (F.I. Italus), ed. Sebastianus Ferarius (printed by Francesco Riccardi at Cremona, 1520 version), p. a3 and *passim*.
[131] For a discussion of the transmission of grace and Aquinas on the *habitus* see Alistar McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 5th ed. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), pp. 348-374.
[132] See the first six theses of Luther's *Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum*, available at the Project Gutenberg internet archive: http://www.archive.org/details/martinluthers95t00274gut. The importance of sacramental penance in Cremona at the end of the fifteenth century finds explicit expression in the statutes of the confraternity of the *Disciplini di Christo flagellato* (1496). Among the

understood as a perpetual, internal state of self-hatred (along with outward mortifications) that would only achieve absolution when the blessed ascended to heaven.

Relying on Prierias' *In praesumptuosas M. Lutheri conclusiones de potestate Papae Dialogus* (1518), Isolani attempted, however naively, to demonstrate a contradiction in Luther's writings by claiming that a continual state of penitence is maintained by virtue of the (sacramentally conditioned) *habitus*. For Isolani, Luther's interpretations of *resipiscite* and *ad cor redite* as the "passing over of the mind" and as a change in one's heart by which one gains "a knowledge of one's own evil" indicated interior actions that necessarily proceeded from the *habitus*[133]:

> "*quis [e]n[im] nisi mentis inops et vocu[m] ignarus resipiscite et ad cor redite actum significare negabit interior[m]: sicut attendite et intelligite. Ab habitu eni[m] p[ro]fluant necesse est: sive habitu[m] virtute[m] dixeris: sive actu[m] primu[m] virtute[m] ipsam p[er]ficie[n]te[m]*"[134]
>
> (Who, if not of weak mind and speech, could not realize that *resipiscite* and *ad cor redite* necessarily signify an interior act? From the *habitus* such acts will flow outward, both affirming the habituated virtue and the first act that achieved the same virtue.)

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various imperatives to which members pledged their obedience was the obligation of confessing once a month for the reason that:
"*Como dice Sancto Augustino in lo libro De penitentia / la confessione sia salute de le anime nostre, dissipatrix / de li vitii, oppugnatrix de li diavoli de lo inferno et inimici / de la humana natura … Essa confessione chiude / et stoppa le boche de lo inferno*." (As Saint Augustine says in the book *De penitentia*, / confession is the salvation of our souls, she who dispels / the vices, she who opposes the devils of the inferno and enemies / of human nature…she [that is] confession shuts / and stops the mouths of hell). For the Italian transcription see Foglia, "Istituzioni ecclesiastiche e vita religiosa dagli inizi del XV secolo al 1523," p. 199.

[133] For Luther's translation of these terms see Martin Luther, "Letter to John Staupitz Accompanying the *Resolutions* to the XCV Theses, 1518" in *Works of Martin Luther*, trans. & ed. Adolph Spaeth, Henry Eyster Jacobs, et al. (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman, 1915), I, pp. 39-43 (available online at http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-luther.html). See also Defendi, "La «Revocatio M. Lutherii ad S. Sedem»," p. 101.

[134] Isolani, *Revocatio Martini Lutherij Augustiniani ad sanctam Sedem* (1520), p. a6.

It is the *habitus*, Isolani argued, that conserves the virtuous attitude of the penitent even as he or she sleeps and it is from the *habitus* that an inward change of heart proceeds.[135] Therefore, it is the disposition habitually maintained through the sacraments and external acts (or good works) that facilitates a change of heart and sustains a penitent attitude. Notwithstanding its shortcomings, the *Revocatio* provides an indication of how some citizens of Cremona may have understood the nature of repentance just before Pordenone began painting in the cathedral. The treatise reaffirms the centrality of an acquired disposition in the process of generating an inward change of heart and, in doing so, reinforces the merit of external acts for the salvation of the soul.

Isolani's insistence on the role of the *habitus* within the growing controversy over the means by which one attained salvation has significant consequences for the beholders of Pordenone's frescoes. Within the context of early sixteenth-century Passion devotion, the artist's paintings offered the faithful a valuable means by which one could acquire and maintain the correct disposition of the soul. However, given the plurality of religious attitudes circulating in Cremona around 1521, the *imitatio Christi*, as a strategy of self-formation through co-suffering, could have been employed in a number of ways: as a devotional framework for saving the soul or as a means of recognizing a correspondence accomplished through the gift of divine grace.[136] The artist's manipulation of the rhetoric of violence might best be seen as an attempt to engage the spiritual preoccupations of his audience and encourage a lasting penitential attitude. Such an attempt, however, was also carefully calibrated to serve

[135] Ibid.
[136] For the differing aims of Catholic and Protestant practices of the *imitatio* see Nandra Perry, "*Imitatio* and Identity: Thomas Rogers, Philip Sidney, and the Protestant Self," *English Literary Renaissance*, v. 35, is. 3 (2005), pp. 365-406.

the ends of artistic self-promotion by distinguishing Pordenone from his peers and to garner their admiration.

Artistic Alterity

The means by which Pordenone's frescoes convey the force of unrestrained violence declare an effective immunity to the passive influence of both local and nonlocal competitors. In attempting to defy the restraints of the medium through forms that appear to project into the space of the viewer, the artist explored the exigencies of hyperbole and perceptual agitation to discover a mode of address that was both striking in its immediacy and disarming in its cognitive dissonance. The nature of Pordenone's performance in the nave cycle can be characterized as a form of artistic alterity directed by the theological preoccupations inherent to the mystery of the Passion and against the codification of the artistic values that were coming to define the dominant *maniere* of painting in Italy. The artist's frescoes renounce dependency on the heroic grandeur, clarity, restraint and psychological density of the works of local and nonlocal peers, such as Boccaccino, Titian, or Michelangelo and, instead, occupy a liminal position in-between or across artistic cultures. The dynamic force and hulking musculature of Pordenone's figures signal some awareness of Michelangelo's art or the art of his imitators, but Pordenone also inflates his figures to grotesque proportions and pays no heed to the integrity of individual bodies.[137] With their rustic hues and jarring contrasts of color, the frescoes also deny allegiance to Titian's dazzling aesthetics of light and the evocative role of coloristic *vaghezza* and *bellezza* in heroic dramas such as the *Assunta* (1516-18) (figure 121). The partial

[137] Smyth has attempted to deconstruct the idea of Pordenone's Romanism but instead of arguing for an antagonist relationship with the art of Central Italy, she suggests that Pordenone was more interested in the effects of the "real." Following Rearick's 1984 thesis, she questions whether the artist ever went to Rome. See Smyth, "Pordenone's 'Passion' Frescoes at Cremona Cathedral," pp. 107-109. Cf. William R. Rearick, "Pordenone «Romanista»," in *Il Pordenone. Atti del convegno internazionale di studio,* pp. 127-134.

deformation of Christ's internal structure in the *Fall on the Way to Calvary* suggests some familiarity with Germanic Passions cycles, but the conception of human form, lack of gory details, and sweeping theatricality that characterize Pordenone's scenes bear little resemblance to the works of his transalpine peers. The importance of these disparities lies in the way they distinguish Pordenone's paintings as the products of a new contaminate mode, one that constitutes a kind of "mimetic violence" conducted in the pursuit of striking religious imagery.[138] By subverting the aesthetic imperatives of his Roman and Venetian peers and exploring the affective potential of physical abjection, Pordenone's frescoes offer a critical adaptation of the *maneria moderna* that puts pressure on any claim to redemptive truth. As such, they provide their own aesthetic alterative to large-scale mural painting in Italy and one that brought a startlingly new urgency to the demands of Christian vision.

[138] By "mimetic violence" I mean to suggest the kind of self-assertive action generated by what René Girard calls "mimetic desire" and directed against a perceived rival, particularly that rival's style, opinions, desires. Idem, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), esp. pp. 145-149; which is the English translation of *La violence et le sacré* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1972), pp. 204-208. See also Chris Fleming's discussion of Girard's analysis of *Don Quixote de la Mancha* from *Mensonge romantique et vérité Romanesque*. Chris Fleming, *René Girard: Violence and Mimesis* (Cambridge, UK; Malden, Mass: Polity, 2004), pp. 16-20.

CHAPTER 3

GLORY IN ABUNDANCE:

THE *CUPOLA GRANDE* AT SANTA MARIA DI CAMPAGNA

Floating somewhere beyond the confines of earthly dimension, the prophets and sibyls that Pordenone painted in the central cupola at the church of Santa Maria di Campagna in Piacenza appear actively penetrated by divine insight (figures 122-130). The fervent gestures and torsions of these figures portray the soul's access to divine mysteries as an ecstatic transgression of natural limits.[1] Given the artist's prior experiments with pictorial limits, it seems peculiar that these impassioned figures – unlike those that crowd the Cremona frescoes or the domes Pordenone painted in Treviso, Venice, and Cortemaggiore – do not transgress their frames. Indeed, the frames themselves appear to have taken on a life of their own: the immense ribs that divide the prophets and sibyls are teeming with a dizzying array of painted figures, vignettes, motifs, and materials. The emphasis given to these ornaments and the preservation of pictorial boundaries mark a departure from the artist's earlier dome paintings. This departure can be understood as a reaction to the material limitations of the site, but more compelling insight emerges when the cupola decorations are read in relation to local

[1] The effects of divine insight were similarly characterized in Marsilio Ficino's commentary on Plato's *Phaedrus* as well as his introduction to the *Ion*. See Marsilio Ficino, *Commentaries on Plato*, ed. and trans. Michael J. B. Allen, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), I, pp. 38-103, 104-193, 194-207. Ficino's earliest discussion of divine insight as a kind of madness occurs in an epistolary tract addressed to Peregrino Agli, *De divino furore* (1457), see *The Letters of Marsilio Ficino*, trans. Members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science in London, 5 vols. (London: Shepheard-Walwyn, 1975), I, pp. 44-48. Ficino's characterization of prophetic insight was widespread by the end of the fifteenth century: his 1484 Latin translation of the Platonic corpus was an immediate best-seller (1,025 copies were sold in under six years) and became the definitive translation of Plato for centuries. See Anthony Grafton, "The Availability of Ancient Works," in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy,* eds. Charles B. Schmitt et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 767-791, esp. pp. 786-787.

artistic activity in Piacenza and Parma and as a response to the object they were designed to glorify: the miracle-working *Madonna di Campagna* (figure 131).

Begun in 1530, the frescoes that Pordenone painted in the central cupola were undoubtedly intended by his patrons to maintain and enhance devotion to the cult object they encompassed. But these paintings also configure a complicated response to an object whose claim to divine authenticity was at issue for Italian reformers concerned with idolatry and what the proper forms of worship should be. Like other Italian cult images, the *Madonna di Campagna* was often treated as a phenomenon beyond the space of doubt; that is, as a divinely-sanctioned figure of "real presence." How, then, do Pordenone's paintings engage with the cult image's claim to mediate divine agency? In this chapter I wish to call attention to a point of contact between the realm of cult images and Pordenone's trans-regional *maniera moderna*; to a confrontation between the claims of a miraculous image and the claims of an artistically-perfected nature manifest in illusionistic painting. Pordenone's cupola decorations create a vast staging of a humble cult image in the sense that they visualize the cult statue's invisible charisma, imparting a sense of portentous wonder that the aesthetically deficient icon could not convey itself. At the same time, I believe that Pordenone is trying to do something more – something particularly risky – in that these frescoes also suggest an attempt to claim some kind of divine authenticity for his ultra-fictive paintings. As we shall see, there seems to be a highly ambiguous relationship here with each "category" of the image feeding off the other, and one in which Pordenone's decorations hold out the possibility that while the cult image might *do* things, his art can nevertheless show or reveal things. This chapter will also consider the reception of Piacentine, Parmesan, and Roman artistic tendencies in

Pordenone's dome frescoes in order to explore how the artist's paintings address local political concerns and distinguish his cupola within a nonlinear network of monumental painted domes.

Political Parochialism

Perhaps the most consequential of all the miracles associated with the *Madonna di Campagna* concerns the Medici pope, Clement VII. During the Sack of Rome in 1527, Clement attributed his escape from the *Lanzichenecchi* to the grace of the Piacentine Madonna he had once visited. To record the fact, the city's governor, a Florentine named Alessandro Caccia, had a life-sized *ex-voto* of the pope erected in the new sanctuary that was under way to house the miraculous icon and its growing cult (figure 132 and 133).[2] Documented since the early eleventh century, the sanctuary of the Madonna di Campagna was one of the oldest Marian shrines in northwest Italy and its propitious location along the Via Francigena made it a popular destination for pilgrims eager to make the acquaintance of its miracle-working statue.[3] The decision to construct a new edifice to honor the *Madonna* occurred a few years prior to the Pope's miraculous evasion on 27 December 1521.[4] The reasons for doing so were of a particular political and religious

[2] Ferdinando and Raffaella Arisi, *Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza* (Piacenza: Tip.Le.Co., 1984), p. 158. In 1727 a papier-mâché copy of the votive statue was installed along the northwest pier of the church, facing the miraculous icon installed upon the high altar.

[3] For the origins of the chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary outside the walls of the city see Andrea Corna, *Storia ed arte in S. Maria di Campagna* (Bergamo: Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche, 1908), pp. 16-39.

[4] On 27 December 1521, a diverse group of Piacentine citizens met in the house of Lazzaro Malvicini da Fontana in the parish of Saint Agatha to discuss the creation of a new church for the *Madonna* and assume the responsibility for carrying it out. Those present at this initial meeting include: R.mo D. Lazzaro Malvicini da Fontana (perpetuo Commendatore di Santa Vittoria), sig. Nicolò Banduca da Fontana, Giovanni Bazzigalupo, Melchiorre dei Visdomo, Pietro Antonio Rollieri, Pietro da Parma notaro, Pietro Scarponi speziale, Giacomo Francesco Galli negoziante, and Niccolò de Bossi fondatore di Campane. Aldo Ambrogio claims that an apparition of the Virgin Mary in a willow tree next to the old church in 1401 helped to spur locals to enlarge and rebuild the sanctuary. Aldo Ambrogio, *Il Santuario della Madonna di Campagna in Piacenza* (Piacenza: Ente Provinciale per il Turismo di Piacenza, 1958), p. 6. The miracle of the apparition is also recorded in *Descrizione dei monumenti e delle pitture di Piacenza corredata di notizie istoriche* (Parma: Carmignani, 1828), pp. 43-44.

significance: first, the decision came one month after the French returned Piacenza to the Papal States and, second, it occurred just six days after the second intercession of the *Madonna della Steccata* on behalf of Piacenza's long-time rival, Parma (figure 134).[5] The *fabbriceria* for the prospective church immediately sought papal endorsement, but it was only years later, after Clement's deliverance from the *imperiali,* that the pope issued a public decree confirming the indulgences that had been conceded to visitors of the *Madonna* by his predecessors.[6] Clement also awarded the Piacentines the right to elect their own custodians and officiators of the mass, as well as to oversee a variety of other operations in the church.[7] The privileges conceded by Clement not only endorsed the

[5] See Arisi, *Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza* , pp. 12-13. On 19 November 1521, eight hundred Swiss mercenaries sent by Odet de Foix, Viscount of Lautrec and acting governor of Milan, abandoned the city of Piacenza, leaving a trail of devastation of in their wake. In his additions to the *Cronica Guariniani*, Cristoforo Poggiali recorded a local response to the destruction: "*Non credo, quod in hoc Munco sint de simili. Ubi hospitabant, ruinabant, et comburebant omnia utensilia, quae erant in domibus. Comburerunt in Palatio magno Communitatis Placentiae omnes solarios, portas, fenestras; ed similiter in domibus Civium. O quam domos ruinaverunt! Credo plus medietatis ex domibus Civium conburerunt. Comburebat capsas, capsonos, banchos, scamos, litterias, solaria, scalas, et omnia, et (etiam) vegetas."* Cristoforo Poggiali, *Memorie storiche della città di Piacenza*, 12 vols. (Piacenza: Giacopazzi, 1757-1766), VII, pp. 325-326. Bruno Adorni has convincingly argued that the decision to build a new church in honor of the Piacentine *Madonna* was in response to the recent miraculous intercession of the *Madonna della Steccata* in, "Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza come tempio «civico»," in *Il Pordenone, Atti del convegno internazionale di studio*, ed. Caterina Furlan (Pordenone: Biblioteca dell'immagine, 1985), pp. 45-49, esp. p. 45; Idem, "Santa Maria di Campagna a Piaceza," in *La chiesa a pianta centrale: tempio civico del rinascimento*, ed. Bruno Adorni (Milan: Electa, 2002), pp. 189-197, esp. p. 190.

[6] Indulgences had been granted by Pope Urban II in 1095 and Gregory X in 1273. See Corna, *Storia ed arte in S. Maria di Campagna*, pp. 33 & 39. The people's letter to Pope Clement is partially transcribed in Corna, Ibid., pp. 65-66, and Adorni, "Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza come tempio «civico»," p. 46. According to Corna, the establishment of the Fabbrica had been confirmed with a private rescript in response to the community's petition to Pope Adrian VI in 1522. However, it was only in June 1529 that Clement decided to publically confirm the statues of the *Fabbrica* and concede the indulgences of his predecessors. For more on Clement's confirmation of the earlier indulgences see Bruna Boccaccia, *Santuari mariani della diocesi Piacenza-Bobbio* (Castelsangiovanni: Pontegobbo, 1997), pp. 14-15.

[7] Such rights were apparently issued in a bull of 1529, as it was noted by the Franciscan Lodovico Dall'Arme (the confessor of Duke Pier Luigi Farnese), and recorded in Padre Giovanni Francesco Malazappi, *Croniche della Provincia di Bologna de' Frati Minori osservanti di San Francesco, raccolte da frate Giovan Franco da Carpi del medesimo Ordine, l'anno MDLXXX per commissione del Rev.mo Padre Ministro Gen.ale di tutta la Religione Francescano, l'Ill.mo frate Franc.o Gonzaga*, Bologna, Archivio Provinciale, pp. 88-92; reproduced in Sante Celli, "Nel quarto centenario della consacrazione della basilica di S. Maria di Campagna," *Bollettino Storico Piacentino*, v. 56 (1961), pp. 17-21 (p. 20).

efficacy of the city's most celebrated cult object but also signaled the city's political alignment with Rome as opposed to local competitors such as the *parmigiani*.

One of the most explicit indications of the community's desire to manifest the impression of continuity with the Holy See was visualized by the decorations commissioned from Pordenone for the miraculous statue's new church.[8] The overall conception and formal vocabulary that his paintings advertise were symptomatic of a growing propensity among local patrons for artworks that register an engagement with Roman pictorial devices and formal language.[9] Such interest in publicizing fealty to Rome may have been part of a strategy to defuse local political tensions. Throughout the 1520s Piacenza was troubled with political unrest between the noble, merchant, and

[8] For the idea that Piacentine patrons utilized art as a means of advertising political loyalty or economic ties to other cities, see Giuseppe Bertini, "Center and Periphery: Art Patronage in Renaissance Piacenza and Parma," in *The Court Cities of Northern Italy: Milan, Parma, Piacenza, Mantua, Ferrara, Bologna, Urbino, Pesaro, and Rimini*, ed. Charles M. Rosenberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 71-137. For centuries the Piacentines had recognized their participation in a network connecting northern Europe to Rome: the Via Francigena, which passes alongside the church of Santa Maria di Campagna, was referred to in local documents as the Via Romea because it brought to Rome the pilgrims known as *Romei*. See Pierre Racine, "Santa Maria di Campagna alla origini delle Crociate," in *Santa Maria di Campagna. Una chiesa bramantesca*, ed. Maurizio Giufreddi (Reggio Emilia: Diabasis, 1995), pp. 15-25, esp. pp. 16-17.

[9] This chapter will focus on Pordenone's paintings in the central cupola of the church, but he also decorated the walls and cupolas of the chapel of Saint Catherine (commissioned by Francesco Pavaro da Fontana), the chapel of the Virgin (commissioned by Pietro Antonio Rollieri), four piers, and a portion of the wall to the left church's entrance (*Saint Augustine Enthroned with Angels*). Pordenone is documented in Piacenza between 15 February 1530 and 11 March 1532, the former date being that of the original, no longer extant contract between Pordenone and the rectors of Santa Maria di Campagna. On 11 March 1532, Pordenone was given leave to depart from Piacenza for up to four months at which time he must return to finish the decorations. This latter document reveals that by March 1532, Pordenone had already painted the chapel of Saint Catherine, four piers, and the majority of the central cupola (he had already been paid the substantial sum of 620 *scudi*). During an undocumented second campaign, Pordenone returned to Piacenza to paint the chapel of the Virgin and the fresco of *Saint Augustine Enthroned with Angels*. I agree with Cohen's chronology of Pordenone's activity in Piacenza and the idea that once Pordenone stopped working on the cupola in March 1532 he never returned to it despite his patrons' urging. For the documents see Arisi, *Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza,* pp. 351-354. See also Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, II, pp. 646-661, 684-690. Furlan speculated that Pordenone's friend Girolamo Rorario might have secured him the commission, although Pordenone also knew the powerful Piacentine Barnaba Dal Pozzo, who was the acting lieutenant of the *podestà* of Cremona in 1520. Caterina Furlan, "Rivisitando il Pordenone: congetture, ipotesi, proposte," in *Il Pordenone*, Exh. Cat. Passariano, Villa Manin; Pordenone, Church of San Francesco (Milan: Electa, 1984), pp. 48-148, esp. p. 82; Idem, *Il Pordenone* (1988), pp. 31 & 185.

artisan classes over control of the urban government. As in Cremona, foreign occupation, plague, and economic destitution also aggravated the situation. It was not until 1528/29, when the pope was liberated after the Sack of Rome that the authority of the central government was reestablished and the city regained some sense of normalcy. Moreover, it was during the reigns of the Medici popes that a number of reforms were instituted in Piacenza to limit the influence of local feudal families in order to concede greater authority to civic institutions and it is tempting to see such reforms as the result of political courtship.[10] Within this context, the *Madonna di Campagna* functioned not only as a personal advocate for the local community's health and salvation, but as the linchpin in a larger campaign of political intrigue.

As a communally-administered religious sanctuary, the church commissioned to house the *Madonna* offered the local populace the opportunity to visually celebrate their special relationship to this particular Madonna with decorations that both amplify her opulence and signal affiliation with the art of the papal court. In Pordenone's frescoes this affiliation is not signaled by passive assimilation or by the violent degradation of Central Italian *disegno*, as we saw at Cremona. In Piacenza, the Parmesan accomplishments of Correggio and his *équipe* bore directly on Pordenone's thinking and constituted an important source of artistic charisma by which the artist coordinated his response to the challenge of dome painting and Roman art more generally. However, by considering how Pordenone engaged with the recent innovations of the leading Emilian

[10] For example, in December 1530, Cardinal Giovanni Salviati, legate of Lombardia Cispadana (a province of the Papal States made up of Piacenza, Parma, Reggio, and Modena), initiated a reform that confirmed the participation of the popular classes in the magisterial office of the elders and the general council. He also crystallized the social divisions on which the urban institutions operated: the *Magnifici*, *Patrizi*, and *mercanti*/*artigiani*. For more on the political and economic history of Piacenza before the arrival of the Farnese Dukes see Daniele Andreozzi, *Piacenza 1402-1545: ipotesi di ricerca* (Piacenza: Tp. Le. Co., 1997), esp. pp. 158-196; Bertini, "Center and Periphery," p. 88.

painters I do not intend to champion Pordenone's art over local precedents or reverse the position ceded to the painter's works by scholars invested in the "aesthetic superiority" of Correggio's cupolas in Parma (figure 135-137).[11] Instead, I will argue that the artist's selective emulation of Emilian and Roman precedents reveals another form of contaminate painting, one characterized by a visual rhetoric of abundance. In addition to distinguishing the artist and honoring the cult statue, this rhetoric of abundance responds to the theological imperatives of Christian image-making and can help account for why past attempts to identify a consistent iconographic program for the dome decorations have failed. As Cohen noted, the sheer abundance and combination of Christian, mythological, and ancient historical references that fill the space of Pordenone's cupola grant the ensemble an "encyclopedic character" that cannot be reduced to a single message.[12] The wealth, diversity, and occasional obscurity of the imagery in the dome

[11] An in-depth study on the relationship between Correggio and Pordenone has yet to be written, but there have been various attempts to identify moments of exchange: Giuseppe Fiocco, *Giovanni Antonio Pordenone* (Udine: La Panarie, 1939), p. 83; Walter Friedlaender, "Titian and Pordenone," *Art Bulletin*, v. 47, n. 1 (1965), pp. 118-121, esp. 119; Myron Laskin, "A Note on Correggio and Pordenone," *Burlington Magazine*, CIX (1967), pp. 355-356; Jürgen Schulz, "Pordenone's Cupolas," in *Studies in Renaissance & Baroque Art presented to Anthony Blunt on his 60th birthday* (London and New York: Phaidon, 1967), pp. 44-50; Freedberg, *Painting in Italy 1500 to 1600*, pp. 191, 195-197; Cecil Gould, *The Paintings of Correggio* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), pp. 72, 183-185; Vittorio Sgarbi, "Pordenone e la maniera: tra Lotto e Correggio," in *Giornata di studio per il Pordenone*, Piacenza, S. Maria di Campagna, 26 settembre 1981, ed. Paola Ceschi Lavagetto (Parma: Silva, 1981), pp. 65-69, esp. p. 68; Eugenio Riccòmini et al., *La più bella di tutte. La cupola del Correggio nel Duomo di Parma* (Milan: Silvana, 1983), pp. 45 & 86; Paola Ceschi Lavagetto, "Il restauro degli affreschi della cupola di Santa Maria di Campagna," in *Il Pordenone* (1985), pp. 51-59, esp. pp. 53-54; Charles Cohen, The *Drawings of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, pp. 49, 53, 65, 68, 117; Idem, "Observations on the Malchiostro Chapel," in *Il Pordenone* (1985), pp. 27-33, esp. p. 30; Idem, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, pp. 149-151, 285, 289-290, 300, 330-332; Caterina Furlan, "Pordenone, Raffaello e Roma: un rapport rivisitato (1515-1522)," pp. 85-112, esp. p. 103; Furlan, *Il Pordenone* (1988), pp. 31 & 190; Poulsen, "Obtrusive Paintings: A Discussion of Baroque Tendencies in the Works of Correggio," *Analecta Romana Instituti Dancici*, v. 23 (1996), pp. 117-145; Smyth, *Correggio's Frescoes in Parma Cathedral*, pp. 100-101; Bertling Biaggini, *Il Pordenone: Pictor Modernus*, pp. 64-66.

[12] Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 294. In this regard, Pordenone's activity in Piacenza appears in direct contradistinction to the ensemble he had just completed in the Pallavicino Chapel at the Church of the Santissima Annunziata in nearby Cortemaggiore, which was designed with a tight illusionistic, iconographic, and psychological unity to celebrate the theme of the Immaculate Conception. See Alessandra Galizzi, *Flying Babies in Emilian Painting: Iconographies of the Immaculate Conception circa 1500,* PhD. Dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore 1992, pp. 212ff.

resist the kind of deductive reasoning that pursues univocal meaning.[13] Rather than judge the difficulty of deciphering the imagery as a failure of the artist, I will argue that iconographic indeterminacy and figurative excess were part of the artist's strategy of pictorial abundance and that instead of attempting to resolve lacunae one must try to understand how rational incongruities and referential ambiguities alter the conditions by which meaning is generated.[14] In doing so, I will suggest how pictorial abundance contributes to an experiment that places the revelatory potential of human artifice in dialogue with a divinely-charged icon.

Furnishing the Place of Miracles

As the chronicle of Niccolò Banduchi da Fontana records, the first stone of the new church of Santa Maria di Campagna was laid on 13 April 1522 in the presence of "*l'imagine della Madonna.*"[15] On this occasion the citizenry of Piacenza had processed to the construction site along with members of the various religious orders present in the city; the canons of the duomo; Cardinal Scaramuzza Trivulzio; his vicar Mons. Pietro Ricorda; and the papal-appointed governor Mons. Goro Gerio, bishop of Fano. The diversity and inclusive character of the attendant crowd reflects a communal investment in the monument and its intended function as the locus for expressions of civic pride and local religious customs.[16] One such custom was practiced on the Feast of the Annunciation and known as the *ballo dei bambini*. Tracing its origins to the visit of Pope Urban II in 1095, the *ballo* consisted of a ritual reenactment of the Presentation in the

[13] The idea that the dome's decorations cannot be translated into univocal terms was first voiced by Giuliano Petracco, "Letture Pordenoniane," *Il Noncello*, n. 60 (1985), pp. 11-30.
[14] This approach was revived not too long ago in discussions of aporia and the visual arts of the Renaissance. See the essays in Alexander Nagel and Lorenzo Pericolo, eds., *Subject as Aporia in Early Modern Art*.
[15] An excerpt of the chronicle is reproduced in Arisi, *Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza,* p. 347.
[16] The building was financed by the community. See Bertini, "Center and periphery," p. 103.

Temple.[17] During this ceremony newborn babies were passed between clergymen assembled in the nave until they reached the high altar, where the cult statue was installed. At this point the children were offered, one by one, to the *Madonna di Campagna* with the implicit understanding that the Virgin – through the mediation of the miraculous sculpture – will "see" the child. This ritual not only affirmed belief in the statue's status as an efficacious conduit of grace, but generated a charged atmosphere during which latent animation was projected onto the *Madonna*. This practice of "attributive agency" or momentarily imputing dynamic presence to an object weakens (however temporarily) the ontological distinction between animate agents and inert matter.[18] As we shall see, the dynamic presence that underlies the cult statue's miraculous agency is something that Pordenone's decorations seek to engage.

The church of Santa Maria di Campagna rose in less than six years to join a network of centrally-planned Marian churches that stretched across pre-modern Italy (figure 138).[19] Such shrines typically commemorate a site that had witnessed the presence of the Virgin and find their architectural antecedents in funerary architecture, such as Christian martyria or pagan mausolea.[20] Built according to a Greek-cross plan

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[17] Among the various indulgences the pope conceded on the occasion of his visit were those granted to women who attended their first mass following childbirth at the ancient chiessetta di Campagna. See Ambrogio, *Il Santuario della Madonna di Campagna in Piacenza*, p. 5; Boccaccia, *Santuari mariani della diocesi Piacenza-Bobbio*, pp. 14-15.

[18] For attributive agency see Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: an Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), esp. pp. 16-27, 96-99, 150.

[19] Other centrally-planned Marian churches that participated in this network include: Santa Maria della Pietà at Bibbona, Santa Maria delle Carceri at Prato, Santa Maria in Portico at Fontegiusta (Siena), La Madonna dell'Umilità of Pistoia, Santa Maria Incoronata at Lodi, Santa Maria della Croce at Crema, La Beata Vergine dei Miracoli of Brescia, Santa Maria della Consolazione at Todi, La Madonna di San Biagio of Montepulciano, Santa Maria della Steccata at Parma, Santa Maria di Macereto near Visso, and the Beata Vergine della Ghiara at Reggio Emilia.

[20] As Richard Krautheimer argued many years ago, the western prototype for such structures can be found in the image of Sancta Maria Rotunda in Rome or the Daurade in Toulouse, which, through their roundness and *occuli*, may have functioned in the medieval imaginary as iterations of the martyrium over the tomb of the Virgin in the valley of Josaphat. Richard Krautheimer, "Sancta Maria Rotunda," in *Studies in Early*

with four chapel-towers and flat terminations, it has been suggested that the church's design resembles an imaginative reconstruction of one of the seven wonders of the ancient world: the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus (figures 139 and 140).[21] This reconstruction appeared as a woodcut in the 1521 translation of Vitruvius' *De Architectura* by Cesare Cesariano. Given the popularity of Cesare's translation and his local fame as the painter of the high altarpiece of the church of Sant'Eufemia (figure 141), it is possible that the architect of the church, Alessio Tramello, made deliberate use of the fanciful illustration to emphasize the antiquity of the sanctuary of the Madonna di Campagna over that of the Madonna della Steccata.[22] Reference to the archetype of classical memorial architecture would also recall the site's original function.

The Piacentine sanctuary marks the location of an early Christian catacomb: numerous early modern sources make mention of how, during the Diocletian persecution

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Christian, Medieval, and Renaissance Art (New York: New York University Press; London: University of London Press, 1969), pp. 107-114 (Originally published in *Arte del primo millennio*, *Atti del II° convegno per lo studio dell'arte dell'alto medioevo, Pavia, 1950*, Turin 1953, pp. 23-27). Cf. Staale Sinding-Larsen, "Some Functional and Iconographic Aspects of the Centralized Church in the Italian Renaissance," *Acta ad Archaeologiam et Artium Historiam Pertinentia (Institutum Romanum Norvegiae)*, v. 2 (1965), pp. 203-252, esp. pp. 220-226. See also Richard Krautheimer, "Review of *Martyrium. Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l'art chretien antique* by Andre Grabar," *Art Bulletin*, v. 35, n. 1 (1953), pp. 57-61; Paul Davies, "La santità del luogo e la chiesa a pianta centrale nel Quattro e nel primo Cinquecento," in *La chiesa a pianta centrale*, pp. 27-35; Luciano Patetta, "I santuari mariani del Rinascimento: simboli e tipologia," in *Il sacro nel Rinascimento: Atti del XII convegno internazionale*, Chianciano-Pienza, 17-20 luglio 2000 (Florence: Franco Cesati, 2002), pp. 115-137.

[21] The woodcut was based on a design by Fra Giovanni Giocondo. See Arisi, *Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza*, p. 82; Vitruvius, *De architectura, translato, commentato et affigurato da Caesare Caesariano* (1521), eds. Arnaldo Bruschi, et al. (Milan: Edizioni Il Polifilo, 1981), pp. xlv-xlviii, & bk. 2 ch. 8, f. 41v. For a discussion about the direct and indirect knowledge of the Mausoleum in sixteenth-century Italy see Sally Hickson, "Gian Cristoforo in Rome: With Some Thoughts on the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus and the Tomb of Julius II," *Renaissance and Reformation*, v. 33, n. 1 (2010), pp. 3-30. Wolfgang Lotz has argued that the five-domed scheme of Tramello's design relied on Byzantine-Venetian models of religious architecture, such as the basilica of San Marco in Venice. I disagree for the subsidiary domes of the church of Santa Maria di Campagna are built over the corners of the crossing rather than over the arms of the church. Cf. Wolfgang Lotz, *Studies in Italian Renaissance Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1977), p. 64.

[22] Reference to the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus may also reflect the resurgence of interest in the monument among Roman antiquarian circles, particularly with regard to the initial design for the tomb of Pope Julius II. Correspondence between Fra Sabba da Castiglione and his informants in the early sixteenth century supplied first-hand knowledge of the monument to Mantua, Venice, and Milan. See Hickson, "Gian Cristoforo in Rome," pp. 3-30.

of 303CE, local followers of Christ were decapitated in a field outside the city's walls and their bodies were thrown into a well or chasm (*pozzo*).[23] The entrance to the famed "*pozzo dei martiri*" lay near the foot of the high altar, which was located directly below the western perimeter of Pordenone's dome paintings until 1555.[24] In the eighteenth century, Cristoforo Poggiali, a conservator at the ducal library of Piacenza, recorded a legend that claimed the well emitted a miraculous oil that was collected and sold by the clergy as a panacea.[25] By aligning the *pozzo* and *Madonna* with the high altar, Tramello orchestrated a concentration of miraculous phenomena that stretched from the crypt to the altar to the enshrined Madonna along a vertical axis.[26] In what follows I will argue that Pordenone attempted to extend this axis upward to include his decorations in the cupola. Before considering how this conceit is constructed as well as the theological ramifications it entails, we must first examine how Pordenone's decorations engaged local and Roman artistic practices in order to better understand the stakes of such a bold move.

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[23] For more on the *pozzo* see Corna, *Storia ed arte in S. Maria di Campagna*, pp. 43-56.

[24] The *pozzo* was accessible until 1580. The location of the high altar was moved during a major restructuring that began in 1555 and extended the west end of the church. See Arisi, *Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza*, p. 358.

[25] Poggiali, *Memorie storiche della città di Piacenza*, I, p. 266-268. A similar combination of cult statue (*Notre-Dame de Sous Terre*) and healing well, which was sanctified by the bodies of early Christian martyrs (*Puits des Saints-Forts*), existed at Chartres cathedral and can be considered a convention of topographical-hagiographic legends. Other examples include such Marian sites as the Blachernai Church in Constantinople and the monastery of Mega Spelaion in Greece. See James Bugslag, "Pilgrimage to Chartres: The Visual Evidence," in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, ed. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), pp. 135-183; and Alexei Lidov, "Miracle-Working Icons of the Mother of God," in *The Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milan: Skira, 2000), pp. 47-57, esp. p. 54.

[26] Mitchell B. Merback has drawn attention to the spatial logic of a number of German host-miracles shrines where cult-imagery, altars, and miracle sites were coordinated along a vertical axis. See Idem, "Channels of Grace: Pilgrimage, Architecture, Eucharistic Imagery, and Visions of Purgatory at the Host-Miracle Churches of Late Medieval Germany," in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, pp. 587-646.

Much like the domes of Santa Maria Coronata at Lodi (1488) or Santa Maria della Croce at Crema (1490), the central cupola of Santa Maria di Campagna is divided into octants articulated by raised ribs that climb to an oculus where they form a ring around the base of the lantern. Pordenone decorated these ribs and the spaces between them to create a thick, heavily ornamented framework through which is seen a radially-conceived illusion of heaven's infinite expanse (figures 122 and 142). The globe of the firmament is populated with twenty Old Testament prophets, twelve pagan sibyls, a host of angels, and, in the vault of the lantern, the image of God the Father (figures 122-130, 143). Due to the lack of attributes and the paucity of legible inscriptions, the exact identity of many figures remains uncertain. The twelve women have always been described as pagan prophetesses, their number reflecting the new canon of sibyls devised for the *camera paramenti* of Cardinal Giordano Orsini's palace in Rome and widely dispersed through Filippo Barbieri's *Discordantiae Sanctorum Doctorum Hieronymi et Augustini* (1481).[27] Beyond this, there is insufficient evidence for differentiating more than four of them.[28]

[27] See Charles Dempsey, *The Early Renaissance and Vernacular Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), pp. 120-134; Mary B. McKinley, "From Cave to Choir: The Journey of the Sibyls," in *Pre-Histories and Afterlives: Studies in Critical Method for Terence Cave*, eds. Anna Holland and Richard Scholar (London: Modern Humanities Research Association and Maney Publishing, 2009), pp. 45-60; Esther Gordon Dotson, "An Augustinian Interpretation of Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling, Part II," *Art Bulletin*, v. 61, n. 3 (1979), pp. 405-429; and Emile Mâle, *L'art religieux de la fin du Moyen Age en France: étude sur l'iconographie du Moyen Age et sur ses sources d'inspiration* (Paris: Librairie A. Colin, 1925; 1st ed. 1908), pp. 253-279. Creighton Gilbert mistakenly attributed the appearance of the twelve sibyls to a mystery play of the fourteenth century (ca. 1385), which, as Dempsey notes (pp. 132-133), Baron James de Rothschild proved to be composed at least a century later. Cf. Creighton Gilbert, "The Proportion of Women," in *Michelangelo on and off the Sistine Ceiling* (New York: George Braziller, 1994), pp. 59-113, esp. 69, 107-108 nt. 16; and Baron James de Rothschild, *Le Mistére du Viel Testament*, 6 vols. (Paris: Firmin Didot et cie, 1878-1891), VI, pp. lxiii-lxix and pp. 215-29 (esp. pp. lxvi & 215).

[28] By utilizing Barbieri's text and the scholarship of Émile Mâle, Jürgen Schulz has suggested identities for four of the sibyls. They are the Lybian, Hellespontic, Erythraean, and Delphic, located respectively in the south-east, south, south-west, and north-west octants of the dome. See Schulz, "Pordenone's Cupolas," p. 47, nt. 22. Cohen has suggested identifies for another four of the sibyls but without convincing evidence. Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone,* II, p. 646. Given the lack of attributes and recognizable texts, it seems unlikely that specific identities were intended.

Among the male figures, only the identities of David, Samson, Daniel, Habbakuk, and Jonah can be stabilized (figures 122, 125, 126, 127, 128).

The framework that overlays the vision of heaven is organized into a network of contained spaces possessing different levels of pictorial realism. The raised ring that surrounds the oculus is crowded with a frieze-like parade of *putti* who drive a variety of animals, both terrestrial and aquatic, around in an endless circle (figures 143-145). These *putti*, as well as their counterparts inhabiting the ribs, are painted in flesh tones against a gold background that is circumscribed by fictive moldings of stepped grey stone. The unusually broad ribs are luxuriantly ornate and teeming with a surprising array of creatures, both grotesque and natural, along with *putti*, weaponry, astrological and musical instruments, vegetation, masks, zoomorphic escutcheons, and banners. In the center of each painted rib is the illusion of a recessed oval within which Old Testament scenes are executed in monochrome to give them the appearance of golden relief sculpture (figures 146-153). As the writings of Carlo Ridolfi attest, these vignettes were legible to early modern viewers and follow the biblical chronology when read counterclockwise starting with the *Creation of the Universe* on the rib between the south and southwest octants and ending with the scene of *Judith and the Head of Holofernes*.[29] The variety and interplay of motifs that enliven the framework also affirm an interest in imitating all of nature's materials, whether they might be sculpted stone, clay, cast metal, cloth, flora or flesh. The remainder of Pordenone's dome decorations consist of a painted

[29] The Old Testament scenes include the *Creation of the Universe*, *Creation of Adam*, the *Dove Returning to Noah with an Olive Branch*, the *Sacrifice of Isaac*, *Joseph Sold into Bondage*, *Moses Receiving the Tablets of the Law*, *David Slaying Goliath*, and *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*. For Ridolfi's description of the cupola see Idem, *Le maraviglie dell'arte*, I, p. 125.

frieze located at the top of the drum (figures 154-169).[30] This frieze consists of eight rectangular fields containing popular mythological episodes painted in color alternating with condensed scenes of ancient history painted in monochrome *tondi* on pilasters.[31]

When viewed in its entirety, the central cupola presents a celebration of the exuberant abundance of imitated matter (animate and inanimate) and it does so without redundancy: not a single figure pose or object is exactly repeated (figure 122). This point is significant for despite the sheer size of the decorated surface, the reuse of cartoons – a method extensively employed by Correggio and his workshop – is nowhere in evidence at Piacenza. In fact, the restoration conducted in the early 1980s suggests that Pordenone did not execute cartoons for the dome with the exception of one utilized for the figure of God the Father.[32] As Paola Ceschi Lavagetto has observed, the numerous *pentimenti* and replaced patches of *intonaco* indicate a direct and relatively free method of execution, one that departed from Correggio and facilitated the opportunity for and effect of

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[30] Apart from the vault decorations (God the Father with three *putti*), this analysis will not consider the exiguous decorations within the lantern. They are both heavily damaged and nearly impossible to see from the floor of the church. From what survives, it appears that the lantern contained a decorative band around its base consisting of festoons and *putti*.

[31] The mythological episodes include the *Rape of Europa*, *Neptune and Amphitrite*, *Venus and Adonis*, *Diana and Nymphs fighting Satyrs*, the *Battle of the Gods and Giants*, the *Labors of Hercules*, and *Processions with Bacchus and Silenus*. According to Jacqueline Biscontin and Roberto Guerrini, the scenes from ancient history were inspired predominantly by Valerius Maximus' *De Factis Dictisque Memorabilibus Libri IX* (an Italian translation of which was available by 1509), although several of the subjects are also mentioned in Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* and a few in Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*. The scenes have been identified as: *Castor and Pollux at the Battle of Lake Regillus*, *Virginius Kills His Daughter*, *Supplication of the Sabbine Women, Naval Battle of Cynegeirus, Proof of the Innocence of the Vestal Tuccia, Battle of Marcus Valerius Corvus, Justice of Trajan,* and *Tomyris with the Head of Cyrus*. As with many ancient texts, Renaissance editions of Valerius were contaminated by other ancient sources and the subject of one of Pordenone's scenes (the *Naval Battle of Cynegeirus*) may depend on a passage from Justin's *Epitome Historiarum trogi Pompei.* See Jacqueline Biscontin, "Il fregio del Pordenone in Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza," *Prospettiva*, v. 20 (1980), pp. 58-69; Roberto Guerrini, "Temi profani e fonti letterarie classiche tra Pordenone e Amalteo," in *Il Pordenone, Atti del convegno internazionale di studio,* pp. 67-74. I believe that Cesariano's translation of Vitruvius may have also provided one of the many literary sources for Pordenone's decorations. In his commentary on the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, Cesariano specifically names Valerius Maximus as a source for the exploits of King Mausolus' wife, Artemisia II. Cf. Vitruvius, *De architectura, translato, commentato et affigurato da Caesare Caesariano* (1521), bk. 2, ch. 8, f. 42r.

[32] Ceschi Lavagetto, "Il restauro degli affreschi della cupola di Santa Maria di Campagna," pp. 52-54.

extemporization.[33] Such an opportunity could only be afforded by extensive graphic preparations wherein Pordenone selectively repeated, fragmented, and combined his resources so that the final product would retain the impression of vitality while offering viewers such abundance and diversity of imagery that pictorial plentitude may be considered a theme of the dome itself.[34]

The visual patterns, sequences, and symmetries of the framework evince a sense of cohesion such that in the past scholars have tried to deduce some kind of program for each motif. However, no text or group of texts has been shown to reveal a consistent pattern of relationship that can take into account all of the depicted phenomena. Indeed, the dome imagery is loaded with illogical juxtapositions and iconographic ambiguities: many of the figures are unidentifiable and the typologies modern scholars have drawn are inconsistent. For example, Jacqueline Biscontin attempted to resolve the apparent discordance between the decorations by appealing to the philosophy of history presented in the *City of God* by Saint Augustine, who was represented by Pordenone to the left of the church's entrance (figure 170).[35] By appealing to Augustine's teleological conception of history and the dialectical struggle between the loves of the terrestrial and divine cities, Biscontin was able to justify the pagan and Christian elements in the cupola. Nevertheless, she misidentified several of the scenes and the particular analogies she drew between them required no specific reference to Augustine.[36] Similarly, Ferdinando Arisi proposed an allegorical reading that attempted to divide the cupola into a hierarchical structure that revealed the superiority of the "*Ecclesia ex-sinagoga*" over the

[33] Ibid.
[34] Pordenone's graphic preparations for the frescoes present the largest surviving group of *chiaroscuro* drawings by the artist. See Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 300-301 & 305.
[35] Biscontin, "Il fregio del Pordenone in Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza," pp. 58-69.
[36] Cohen calls attention to this problem in *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 293-294.

"*Ecclesia ex-gentibus*," drawing on multiple textual sources to argue for the influence of humanist ideas topical in Rome and the possibility of Paolo Giovio's involvement as an advisor.[37] Here too the interactions that Arisi proposed between the Old Testament scenes and the monochrome *tondi* betray a number of discrepancies, most notably the lack of figurative concordance between the vertically-aligned scenes of *Noah's Ark* and *Tomyris beheading Cyrus* (figures 148, 169, 171).[38] The very fact that many of heaven's occupants are unidentifiable suggests that such characters were not intended to mark the distinction between two systems of belief, but their eschewal. As a result, some of the typological relationships that Arisi drew between the meanings of various figures and scenes appear incidental.

Notwithstanding, scholars have argued that the imagery portrays a basic impetus toward the providential diffusion of sacred truth prefigured by the prophets and sibyls of the cupola and fulfilled by the scenes from the life of the Virgin which were painted in the drum of the dome by Bernardino Gatti in 1543 (figures 172-173).[39] This is to say that scholars have preferred to gloss over questions of how or why the imagery resists interpretive integration, reducing the profusion of visual stimuli to a didactic allegory about Christ's supersession. To be sure, the major tenets of such readings are correct, but

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[37] Ferdinando Arisi, "Bibbia, Mito e Storia nella Cupola Grande di S. Maria di Campagna, a Piacenza, affrescata dal Pordenone," *Il Noncello*, n. 56 (1983), pp. 7-24; expanded in Arisi, *Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza*, pp. 11, 15-22, 188-212; and summarized in Arisi, "Pittura dalla Madonna di San Sisto (1513-1514) al 1545," in *Storia di Piacenza, v. III, Dalla Signoria viscontea al principato farnesiano (1313 - 1545),* ed. Piero Castignoli (Piacenza: Tip.Le.Co., 1997), pp.843-885 (pp. 872-875). As Arisi noted, in 1526 Paolo Giovio was the *Commendatario* of the church of Santa Vittoria, to which the "antichissima Chiesuola" of Santa Maria di Campagna had been aggregated centuries prior. However, Giovio's involvement in the decorative project for the cupola, whether direct or indirect, is purely speculative.

[38] Arisi himself admits he was at a loss to discover the relation. Idem, *Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza,* pp. 196.

[39] See Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, pp. 290-299; Paola Ceschi Lavagetto, "L'opera pittorica in Santa Maria di Campagna," in *Santa Maria di Campagna. Una chiesa bramantesca*, pp. 41-71; John Shearman, "The Chigi Chapel in S. Maria del Popolo," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, v. 24 (1961), pp. 129-160 (p. 145 nt. 75); Idem, *Funzione e illusione: Raffaello, Pontormo, Correggio*, ed. Alessandro Nova (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1983), pp. 115-147, 233-251(pp. 129 & 244 nt. 75).

they dismiss much of the imagery adorning the framework as mere "ornament," reflecting a modernist conception of such decorations that ignores their capacity to bear serious content. Renaissance texts, however, reveal that terms such as *ornato* (Latin: *ornatus*) and *ornamentum* had multiple and diverse connotations and applications. For Cristoforo Landino, *ornato* was understood as an added or attached embellishment. In the preface to his 1481 edition of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, he praised Masaccio's skill as an imitator of nature and composer whose pictures were "*puro senza ornato*" (pure without ornateness).[40] Alternatively, Leon Battista Alberti's application of the term *ornamentum* was far more relative and could refer to that which brings pleasure and dignity, as something auxiliary, but also as constitutive of the unity of the design.[41] This latter sense of the term has also been shown to inform the works of Leonardo Bruni, for whom ornamentation of speech (which encompassed rhythm and metaphor) was not superficial but vital for mediating "between the knowledge of things and the sciences of the word," making it essential to the process of cognition and the illumination of reality.[42] As we shall see, Pordenone's use of ornament in Piacenza reflects a pre-modern understanding of the concept that is simultaneously constitutive and supplementary, and much more than a complement to beauty. Another noticeable oversight of modern scholarship is the lack of consideration given to the cult statue or how Pordenone's decorations engage local antecedents.

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[40] See Helmut Wohl, *The Aesthetics of Italian Renaissance Art: A Reconsideration of Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 56-59.
[41] See Paul Davies, "The Double Life of Alberti's Column," *Art History*, v. 13, n. 1 (1990), pp. 126-128.
[42] Hanna-Barbara Gerl and John Michael Krois, "On the Philosophical Dimension of Rhetoric: The Theory of *Ornatus* in Leonardo Bruni," *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, v. 11, n. 3 (1978), pp. 178-190 (p. 180 for the quote).

Translatio studii

While the practice of projecting a vision of heaven on ceilings and domes bespeaks an unbroken tradition from antiquity, this particular representation of the celestial kingdom is not populated with saints, apostles, martyrs, or the twenty-four elders of the apocalypse, but with Old Testament prophets and pagan sibyls. In early sixteenth-century Italy, some of the most conspicuous precedents for Marian churches decorated with such figures can be found in papal commissions such as Michelangelo's frescoes (figure 174) for the Sistine Chapel ceiling (1508-12) or Bramante's design for the *rivestimento* of the Santa Casa at Loreto (ca.1509).[43] The Sistine Chapel ceiling has figured largely in past analyses of Pordenone's cupola as a source of inspiration for the subject matter, the poses of specific figures, and as a model for the expression of

[43] The combination of sibyls with Evangelists and Church Fathers was commissioned from Pintorricchio by Pope Julius II for the vault of the choir in Santa Maria del Popolo (ca.1509). It is questionable as to whether or not Pordenone and his patrons were aware of Correggio's initial idea for the cupola of Parma Cathedral, which included a fictive parapet occupied by prophets and sibyls with sphinxes (later replaced by the Apostles). Drawings for these figures survive at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. See David Ekserdjian, *Correggio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 242-244. The prophets and sibyls included in Bramante's design for the *rivestimento* were not carved until after Pordenone's dome painting. See Kathleen Weil-Garris, *The Santa Casa di Loreto: Problems in Cinquecento Sculpture*, 2 vols., Published dissertation from Harvard University, 1965 (New York and London: Garland, 1977), I, pp. 12-15 & 25. Although almost none of them appear in Marian churches, instances of combining prophets and sibyls in ecclesiastical settings that predate the abovementioned papal commissions include Amico Aspertini's vault in the chapel of Sant'Agostino at the Church of San Frediano, Lucca (1506-8/9), Agostino di Duccio's reliefs in the Tempio Malatestiano, Rimini (1454), Fra Angelico and Benozzo Gozzoli's fresco in the Chapterhouse of San Marco, Florence (ca.1442), Andrea and Nino Pisano's reliefs for the Campanile in Florence (1337-1341), Giovanni Pisano's façade sculptures (ca. 1285) and the sibyl mosaics of the pavement (1481-1483) at Siena Cathedral. Those found in secular contexts include Perugino's fresco in the Collegio del Cambio in Perugia (1497-1500), Pinturicchio's lunettes in the Sala delle Sibille, Borgia Apartments, Vatican (1492-95), and the abovementioned *camera paramenti* at the Orsini palace, Rome (ca. 1430). After the first decade of the sixteenth century the combination became more fashionable in church decorations. Prophets coupled with sibyls appear in Raphael's and Timoteo Viti's frescoes for the arch above the Chigi Chapel in Santa Maria della Pace, Rome (ca.1514), in Correggio's painted nave frieze in the Church of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma (1520s), in Lorenzo Lotto's frescoes in the Oratorio Suardi, Trescore (1523-24), in Girolamo Romanino's *cantoria* for the Duomo of Asola outside of Mantua (1525), the vault of the Church of Santa Maria della Neve, Pisogne (1534), and so on. Before the turn of the century, prophets and sibyls tended to be represented separately when they appeared on church ceilings. A few examples of sibyls adorning the vaults of private family chapels include Domenico Ghirlandaio's Sassetti Chapel in the Church of Santa Trinità, Florence (1485), Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome (1489-91), and Pinturicchio's Baglioni Chapel in the Collegiata di Santa Maria Maggiore, Spello (1501).

profound emotional drama through heroically-conceived bodies.[44] What has not been stressed is that the similarities between these papal commissions and the cupola of Santa Maria di Campagna give expression to a concerted effort among the Piacentine citizenry to advertise their familiarity with the figural language and iconography promoted by the papacy. Local precedent for such a practice had been set during the second decade of the sixteenth century by the Benedictines at the nearby church of San Sisto. Following the arrival of Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* (1512-1513) (figure 175), the monks had sought out and obtained the services of Michelangelo's *garzone*, Bernardino Zacchetti, commissioning him to decorate the eastern cupola (1517) of their church with figures and subjects poached from the Sistine Chapel ceiling (figure 176 and 177). The preference among the Benedictines at San Sisto for an artist who had worked in Rome represents a marked contrast to previous patterns of Piacentine patronage. At the start of the sixteenth century, Piacenza lacked a local tradition of painters and commissions most often went to artists of Lombard or Piedmont origins, many of whom had painted at the Milanese court.[45]

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[44] See Lili Fröhlich-Bum, "Beiträge zum Werke des Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone," *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, v. 2 (1925), pp. 68-90; Arisi, *Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza*, p. 188 & 194; Ceschi Lavagetto, "Il restauro degli affreschi della cupola di Santa Maria di Campagna," p. 53; Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, pp. 298 & 324, n. 100, II, p. 651; Furlan, "Pordenone, Raffaello e Roma," pp. 104-106; Bertling Biaggini, *Il Pordenone: Pictor Modernus*, pp. 61-64, 68-70.

[45] There is some textual evidence for Piacentine painters of ephemera, such as the Cassano family and Agostino Veggi, as well as for figure painters such as Giovanni da Mezzafontana and Mezzano Ziliolo, but nothing of their works survives. For more on the local artistic scene see Arisi, "Pittura dalla Madonna di San Sisto (1513-1514) al 1545," esp. pp. 847-864; and Bertini, "Center and Periphery," pp. 75-89 & 100. Non-local artists who worked in Piacenza at the start of the century include Bernardino Lanzani, the above-mentioned Cesare Cesariano, Bartolomeo Bernardi, and the Cremonese painter Bonifacio Bembo. Of these artists, Bartolomeo Bernardi, called il Bologna, may have influenced local expectations about dome painting for he is believed to have painted decorations in the dome of the church of Santa Maria in Torricella, Piacenza, in 1517. This church, which has gone through several renovations, a severe fire, and an airstrike, was originally built to protect a popular Marian image. Unfortunately, Bernardi's decorations are lost. See Ersilio Fausto Fiorentini, *Le Chiese di Piacenza* (Piacenza: T.E.P. Gallarati, 1976), pp. 132-133.

Zacchetti's dome marked the introduction of monumental Roman ceiling painting to the provinces of Parma and Piacenza and, as such, must be considered an important point of reference for both Pordenone's and Correggio' domes.[46] Its significance, however, lies in more than just conspicuous figural citations or iconography; it also attempts to reproduce Raphael's innovations from the cupola of the Chigi Chapel at Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome (1513-1516) (figure 178).[47] In fact, Zacchetti consciously cultivated an association with the prince of painters, identifying himself as a "*scolaro di Raffaello.*"[48] As John Shearman has demonstrated, Raphael's dome successfully synthesized a radial system of illusion with a directed center that imposes a particular viewpoint, one related to the ideal viewer's approach.[49] A perennial problem among dome painters, especially those practitioners of the north Italian tradition defined by Andrea Mantegna and Melozzo da Forlì, was the difficulty of maintaining a radially-symmetrical illusion of space as the illusion approached the dome's apex.[50] Since the

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[46] The impact of Zacchetti's cupola on Pordenone and Correggio has been minimized by Smyth, *Correggio's Frescoes in Parma Cathedral,* p. 119, nt. 30; Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 150; and Gould, *The Paintings of Correggio*, p.72 nt. 1.

[47] It is now difficult to gauge the importance of other nearby examples of ceiling painting for Pordenone and Correggio. Lomazzo (1584) mentions a few Milanese examples of notable *di sotto in sù* perspective, albeit lost today: the four evangelists painted by Bramante for the church of Santa Maria della Scala and a vault painted by an artist identified as Agostino da Milano in the Magdalene Chapel in the church of Santa Maria del Carmine. Lomazzo, *Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scoltura et architettura*, II, pp. 235-236. I do not think that the ceiling frescoes of the Cappella Ducale (1473) in the Castello Sforzesco by Bonifacio Bembo and others were of significant interest to Correggio or Pordenone.

[48] In the eighteenth century, Girolamo Tiraboschi recounted seeing a painting of an apostle in the house of the Rangoni of Reggio that Zacchetti had signed as "*scolaro di Raffaello.*" See Davide Gasparotto, "L'arredo sacro dal Quattrocento al Settecento," in *La chiesa di San Sisto a Piacenza*, ed. Laura Berti and Licia Papagno (Reggio Emilia: Edizioni Diabasis, 2006), pp. 95-132 (p. 103).

[49] John Shearman, "The Chigi Chapel in S. Maria del Popolo," pp. 129-160; Idem, "Correggio's Illusionism," in *La prospettiva rinascimentale: codificazioni e trasgressioni*, ed. Marisa Dalai Emiliani (Florence: Centro Di, 1980), pp.281-294; Idem, *Funzione e illusione*, pp. 115-147, 233-251; Idem, *Only Connect…Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance*, The A.W. Mellon Lectures in the fine Arts, 1988, Bollingen Series XXXV.37 (Washington, D.C.; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 149-191. See also Morel, "Morfologia delle cupole dipinte da Correggio a Lanfranco," pp. 1-34.

[50] Other artists that engaged in this problem include Marco Palmezzano at the Cappella Acconci, San Biagio, Forlì, ca. 1500 (destroyed), Bernardino and Francesco Zaganelli at the Cappella Sforza, San Francesco, Cotignola, ca. 1500, a follower of Melozzo at San Fortunato, Rimini, and Francesco Prata's

viewpoint of such illusions descends along the dome's vertical axis, the subject of the illusion becomes progressively contracted toward the dome's center. If the illusion were to proceed into the center, the foreshortening of the subject would become so acute that a worm's eye view would result and the subject would become illegible.[51] In the Chigi Chapel, Raphael filled the center of the dome with an anthropomorphic image of God the Father that does not conform to the dome's vertical axis but is instead directed toward an implied spectator located at the threshold of the chapel. The insertion of a directed center compromises the viewpoint of the radial illusion governing the lower sections of the dome, but Raphael successfully masked the break in the illusion with an architectonic framework that maintains the impression of unified figure space.[52] When seen from the threshold, the integrity of Raphael's illusion is preserved because the space occupied by God the Father appears continuous with the area directly below it. As a result, a visually-convincing continuum is established between real and fictive space, creating what Shearman called a "transitive relationship between dome and viewer."[53] Such a relationship has the potential to enhance the appearance of real presence and the viewer's perception that he/she is part of the represented subject.[54] However, as the viewer enters the space of the chapel and adopts other viewpoints the coherency of the illusion breaks down.

Apostoli e angeli musicanti cupola in the cappella del Sacramento at the chiesa di Santi Fermo e Rustico, Caravaggio, ca. 1525-26. For illustrations of these domes see Rezio Buscaroli, *La pittura romagnola del quattrocento* (Faenza: Fratelli Lega, 1931), p. 173; and Mina Gregori, ed., *Pittura tra Adda e Serio: Lodi, Treviglio, Caravaggio, Crema* (Milan: Cassa di Risparmio delle Provincie Lombarde, 1987), pp. 204 & 234.

[51] Shearman, *Only Connect…,* p. 175.

[52] Shearman, "Correggio's Illusionism," p. 287.

[53] Shearman, *Only Connect...* p. 188. Shearman's use of the term "transitive" to describe the relationship between the work of art and the viewer depends on its definition as "taking a direct object to complete the sense" (OED). For a critique of this term see Ernst Gombrich, "Review of *Only Connect…Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* by John Shearman," *New York Review of Books*, March 4, 1993, pp. 19-21.

[54] Shearman, *Only Connect...* p. 188.

Despite the naiveté of Zacchetti's clumsily articulated figures, his dome at San Sisto was integral for the transmission of Raphael's ideas to the north. Located over the entrance to the church rather than at the crossing, the dome is similarly organized by an architectural framework that takes the form of a fictive loggia. Unlike Raphael's cupola, where the figures are represented as existing beyond the confines of the church, the lower sections of Zacchetti's loggia frame eight prophets seated along a parapet within the dome (a conceit reminiscent of Melozzo's vault for the sacristy of Saint Mark at the Santa Casa, Loreto, and repeated in the domes of his followers[55]) (figures 179-181). The deep blue sky that frames the prophets appears contiguous with that painted in the oculus where one finds the image of Christ in glory with angels. Here the heavenly host is arranged horizontally across the top of the dome and nearly perpendicular to the radial illusion governing the lower parts (figure 177). The impression of a directed center relies on the positioning of Christ's body off-center and turned to the side so that his attention is addressed to viewers standing at the perimeter of the dome and facing the church's exit. This is to say that Zacchetti's attempt at producing a transitive relationship between the space of the dome and the space of the beholder is not directed at the threshold of the church but towards its interior and departing visitors. By directing a vision of the resurrected Christ to those leaving the church, Zacchetti's cupola offered the faithful a visual confirmation of divine disclosure communicated through the prophets, a reminder of what awaits them at the end of time, and – being located at the threshold between sacred and secular space – an admonition that Christ's omnividence continues beyond the

[55] See Nicholas Clark, *Melozzo da Forlì: pictor papalis* (London: Sotheby's Publications; New York: Harper & Row, 1990), pp. 43-59. The formula for representing foreshortened figures against a fictive dado within the space of the dome can be seen, for example, in Marco Palmezzano's dome in the Cappella Acconci, San Biagio, Forlì, or in Bernardino and Francesco Zaganelli's dome in the Cappella Sforza, San Francesco, Cotignola.

walls of the church.[56] It must be acknowledged that due to areas of paint loss and water damage the impression of continuity between the dome's center and margin is partially spoiled. What is certain, however, is that Zacchetti's cupola helped to disseminate Raphael's conceptual apparatus, making a trip to Rome less obligatory for ambitious imitators.

The problems of conveying a persuasive synthesis between center and margin and constructing a transitive relationship between art and audience were precisely what Pordenone and Correggio responded to in their domes. But the means by which they did so and the consequences for the beholder differ in considerable ways. In exploring how these artists responded to the innovations of Roman ceiling painting, I am not proposing a genealogy traceable to a specific prototype nor the idea that Pordenone's central cupola for the church of Santa Maria di Campagna is simply the extension of a type that had been articulated most recently by Correggio. Instead, each dome constitutes a discreet event that is both autonomous and embedded within a series; that is, each dome signifies within a series while also drawing on artistic devices and concepts from beyond that series to create and maintain heterogeneity and difference through imitation and transformation.[57]

Rethinking the Illusion of Continuity

Much like his mural paintings in Cremona, Pordenone's prior achievements as a *frescante* of domes featured a form of illusionism that projects a tumultuous cast of

[56] The importance of such a vision for the Benedictines, particularly with its allusion to the *Parousìa* (Rev. 1:7), can be inferred by the decision of the chapter located at San Giovanni Evangelista in Parma to commission a similar subject combined with the Vision of Saint John from Correggio three years later. For a discussion of Correggio's iconography see Geraldine D. Wind, "The Benedictine Program of S. Giovanni Evangelista in Parma," *Art Bulletin*, v. 58, n. 4 (1976), pp. 521-527.

[57] The similarities between Pordenone's dome for Santa Maria di Campagna and the decorations Correggio and his workshop executed in Parma are manifold. The works of these artists reveal a shared decorative inventory, but the means by which that inventory was manipulated and purposes to which it was put differ.

bodies into the church, notionally transfiguring the sacred space in which the viewer stands. The celestial figures that plummet from the cupolas (figures 182-183) he painted in the Malchiostro Chapel in Treviso (1519), San Rocco in Venice (1528), and the Pallavicino Chapel in Cortemaggiore (ca. 1529-1530) have led scholars to the conclusion that while he and Correggio were similarly concerned with an atectonic handling of space and the distribution of subject matter in relation to the approaching spectator's viewpoint, the domes painted by these artists manifest "dramatically opposed sensibilities."[58] Be that as it may, the criteria by which this opposition is typically judged is misguided in the case of the central cupola of Santa Maria di Campagna. In this particular instance the means by which Pordenone distinguished his artistic persona from that of Correggio's has less to do with the illusion of continuity between real and fictive space and more with an alternative method of composing with very different artistic and hermeneutical stakes.

While painting the domes of San Giovanni Evangelista (1520-22) and Parma Cathedral (1526-30), Correggio succeeded in completely dissolving the architectural surface to create continuous and infinitely-receding realms of light (figures 135-137, 184). In both domes, virtual space rises to an indeterminate height that is also the source of light, uniting, as David Summers has remarked, "the significance of elevation to that of radiance."[59] The innumerable figures that ascend in concentric circles toward the apex of the cupola of Parma cathedral, for example, slowly dematerialize through subtle tonal

[58] Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p.151. The word "sensibility" is problematic. The idea that one can actually know the character of a pre-modern artist's sensibility or emotional consciousness can transform works of art into unclouded reflections of that artist's biological disposition. This idea is unjustifiably reductive and presumes an artist's emotional consciousness is stable or fixed. The cupola that Pordenone painted at the church of San Giovanni Elemosinario near the Rialto in Venice (c.1531) is excluded from my discussion because its center consists of a sculpted relief and Pordenone's participation in its planning and execution is unclear.

[59] David Summers, *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism* (London: Phaidon, 2003), p. 537.

transitions into golden light. The atmospheric continuity which is characteristic of both of Correggio's domes fuses the break in viewpoint between that of the center and that of the margin.[60] This continuity emphasizes a perspectivally-convincing continuum that relates to both the space of the church and the light by which the spectator sees it. Since these effects transpire on a colossal scale, the heavenly visions of Correggio's cupolas offer more than an extension of the viewer's reality. Indeed, they appear to incorporate that reality into the subject of the painting: looking up from the threshold of the church's crossing, the viewer is bodily subsumed into an illusion that climbs upward from real to virtual space.[61]

Like Pordenone, Correggio was acutely aware of where he stood in relation to the Roman *maniera moderna*: his dome paintings are not the products of passive assimilation but constitute critical responses. The profoundly sensual, tactile persuasiveness of his figures, combined with the unifying effects of golden light, subtle atmospheric transitions and foreshortening enhance the sensation of proximity between the mortal and divine spheres to an unprecedented extent and provide a lesson on the variability of human form in action when seen from below. Moreover, the severe truncation of the Virgin's anatomy and the disturbing emphasis on the lower body of the foreshortened Christ present a departure from Roman standards of pictorial decorum (figures 185-186). The misgivings that such novelty could induce was apparent, even thirty years later, when, in preparing his *Assumption* for Santa Maria della Steccata, Bernardino Gatti admitted to an

[60] Shearman, *Only Connect...,* p. 184; Idem, "Correggio's Illusionism," p. 287. It should also be noted that the organization of the figures in both of Correggio's domes is structured to accommodate secondary viewing conditions for different audiences. Shearman, *Only Connect…,* pp. 182-184; Smyth, *Correggio's Frescoes in Parma Cathedral*.

[61] Cf. Shearman, "Correggio's Illusionism," p. 291, where he differentiates between the effects of Correggio's two cupola's on the space of the beholder.

acquaintance that, "*...non voglio stare alla discrezione di tanti cervelli, e sapete quello che fu dito al Correggio al Duomo*" (I do not wish to stand at the discretion of so many intellects, for you know what was said to Correggio at the Duomo).[62]

Those who lauded Correggio's domes emphasized the "*estremo artificio*" of the painter's manner of foreshortening that produced "*stupendissima meraviglia*" in whoever beheld his figures.[63] Correggio's accomplishments in foreshortening were occasionally praised in conjunction with Pordenone's and with particular regard to the cupola of Santa Maria di Campagna, where one sees "*terribilissimi scurzi*."[64] In Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo's *Trattato*, for example, Pordenone's and Correggio's works served as paradigmatic examples of the first and second types of "*viste mentite,*" which allow a figure seen from below to appear "*come se cosí veramente fosse*" (as if it truly was so).[65] In modern scholarly discourse, the principal point of comparison between Correggio's conception of cupola design and Pordenone's has continued to revolve around the effects of marvel by focusing particularly on the dynamics operating within the illusion of continuity between real and fictive space.[66] Whereas Correggio erased the architectural surface of his domes to create the impression of an unbounded, yet unified space through which *figure allegre* ascend to join the *pleroma*, Pordenone sought to highlight the downward projection of his clamorous figures into the space of the beholder,

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[62] Eugenio Riccòmini, *Correggio* (Milan: Electa, 2005), p. 82.
[63] Quotes are from Armenini, *De' veri precetti della pittura*, bk. III, ch. III, p. 177; and Vasari, *Le Vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, IV, p. 111. See also Federico Zuccari's praise of Correggio in the margins of his edition of Vasari's *Le Vite* in Michel Hochmann, "Les annotations marginales de Federico Zuccaro à un exemplaire des *Vies* de Vasari," *Revue de l'Art*, v. 80 (1988), pp. 64-71. Zuccari's annotations are remarkable for their early acknowledgement of Vasari's Tuscan bias. He even notes that Vasari's disparaging remarks against Pordenone's works at the palace of Prince Andrea Doria in Genoa were not due to the painter's artistic inferiority, but because he was not Tuscan.
[64] Armenini, *De' veri precetti della pittura,* p. 177.
[65] Lomazzo, *Trattato dell'arte,* II, p. 235.
[66] See Riccòmini, *La più bella di tutte,* pp. 82-86; Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 151.

occasionally employing painted architecture as a foil. For example, the fictive loggia he painted in the dome of the Pallavicino chapel at Cortemaggiore functions as a frame transgressed by an outpouring of figures descending to earth (figure 183). However, the idea that Correggio's illusionism seeks to incorporate the viewer into a fiction of transcendental ascent while Pordenone's threatens viewers with an invasion of real space does not hold for the central cupola of Santa Maria di Campagna. For one, the insinuation of an illusionistic assault on the viewer's space by the headlong fall of *God the Father* from the cupola's lantern is undermined by the modest size of the image and a physical break in the dome's surface: a space of several meters separates the dome proper from the vault of the lantern (figures 122 and 143). The small diameter of the oculus and the considerable height of the lantern severely restrict visibility, imposing a steep viewing angle that requires spectators to stand well within the circumference of the dome in order to see the diminutive image of the Almighty. The divergence from Pordenone's previous domes, wherein the illusion of a descending heavenly host ignores architectural constraints to dominate the approaching viewer's field of vision, may be the consequence of trying to adapt to the physical limitations of the setting.[67] In this case, Pordenone's efforts to negotiate the synthesis of a directed center with the radial illusion governing the dome's lower portions resulted in the creation of a central figure so severely foreshortened that the deity's proportions are rendered incomprehensible (figure 143).

[67] Cohen has suggested that the large size of the cupola and the variety of its architectural members kept Pordenone from attempting a vision of the firmament uninterrupted by a painted armature. I do not believe that the size of the dome was necessarily a deterrent. Before painting the dome of Parma Cathedral, the dimensions of which are 10.95 x 11.95m and thus larger than the 10.35m diameter of the dome of Santa Maria di Campagna, Correggio used plaster to fill in the obtuse angels of the octagonally-shaped Gothic dome to create a unified, approximately hemispherical surface. (Cf. Shearman, *Only Connect*…, p. 188.) Although it would have cost more money, taken more time, and departed from the regularity that governs the other domes of the church (all of which are octagonal and ribbed), the idea of plastering over the ribs of the central cupola to create a continuous surface was certainly plausible.

Despite this, God the Father's torso and those of the three *putti* who hold him aloft appear upright to viewers approaching from the entrance. There is, therefore, at least some notional coherency between the viewpoint imposed by the imagery in the lantern's vault and by that of the figures within the dome who occupy the octant opposite the entrance to the church.

Far more space is devoted to a celestial ring of ponderous figures and clouds that orbit around the foreshortened image of the Godhead. And yet, while the cast of prophets and sibyls crowd against the picture plane, none of them transgress it. Instead, the impression of continuity between real and fictive space relies on adept foreshortening and consistent radial organization of monumental figures looming just beyond the ornamented framework. The emotional immediacy with which these figures fervidly reach out to the world of the spectator also encourages beholders to "imagine away" distinctions between fiction and reality.[68] But the actions of the prophets and sibyls not only implicate the presence of a beholder: many of them engage in heated interactions conveyed by counterpoised gestures that direct the viewer's gaze upward to the image of God in the lantern and downward – *past* Gatti's scenes of the life of the Virgin – to the miraculous effigy ensconced on the high altar (figures 123-130).[69] This point is crucial for understanding what is at stake for Pordenone's art at the church of Santa Maria di Campagna: the gestures of these figures articulate a visual axis between Pordenone's animated illusions and an object of "real" animation. In doing so, they facilitate a relationship that seeks to incorporate the miracle-working *Madonna di Campagna* into a

[68] Podro, *Depiction*, p. 16.
[69] The statue of the *Madonna di Campagna* had been located on the high altar since 24 December 1531. Corna, *Storia ed arte in S. Maria di Campagna*, pp. 96-97. The Madonna is still installed on the high altar, but in a much later shrine built in 1791 and accompanied by sculptures of *Saint John the Baptist* and *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*.

supratemporal vision of the celestial kingdom and the syncretic story of salvation it espouses (figure 211).[70]

When read in terms of a hierarchical diffusion of divine grace descending along the dome's vertical axis, the interspatial connection works to enhance the authority of the *Madonna* as a vehicle through which divine intervention is made manifest and sanctified by the Eternal Father. The interspatial connection also implies that the Virgin's sanctity, as well as the miraculous power exerted through the statue on the high altar, is not due to her own merit but to the grace of God. When read upward, from floor to ceiling, the visual relationship that Pordenone's paintings construct with the cult object could be said to reflect a desire to extend the aura of the miraculous image and participate in the supernatural essence that acts through it. While audacious, such a desire was not exceptional. Regardless of whether or not Titian actually painted the miracle-working *Cristo portacroce* at the Scuola di San Rocco in Venice, Christopher Nygren has shown

[70] Schwarzweller was the first to observe that the painted figures of Pordenone's domes often create cross-spatial relations with representations located elsewhere in the chapel or church, thus disrupting the conception of artworks as self-contained objects. Idem, *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, pp. 50 & 84. Shearman has argued that Raphael's Chigi Chapel was influential on Pordenone's conception of how the aligning of viewpoints within interspatial relationships can enhance the narrative realism of an event. Shearman's argument is based on the idea that the altarpiece originally planned for the Chigi Chapel was an *Assumption of the Virgin* and that her ascent into heaven would have been on axis with the image of the Eternal Father above, both of which would have appeared upright to the spectator at the threshold to the chapel. Shearman argues that Pordenone borrowed this conceit when he planned the image of his *God the Father* in the lantern and the *Assumption of the Virgin* in the drum (painted by Gatti) at Santa Maria di Campagna (Schulz disagrees). Since Raphael's altarpiece was never executed and there is no incontrovertible evidence that Pordenone ever visited Rome, knowledge of this conceit was probably indirect or not at all. Moreover, there are myriad north Italian precedents for cross-spatial relationships between chapel decorations. As Shearman himself pointed out, Mantegna's fresco of the *Assumption* (destroyed) in the Eremitani at Padua showed the Virgin gazing upwards toward the figure of God painted by Pizzolo in vault. Although the link between the paintings of *God the Father* and the *Assumption* was limited at the Eremitani by a lack of dramatic and spatial unity, it nevertheless presents an important precedent that problematizes the argument for a direct hierarchical diffusion of influence from Roman center to Piacentine periphery. Shearman, "The Chigi Chapel in S. Maria del Popolo," p. 145 nt. 75; Idem, *Funzione e illusione*, pp. 129 & 244 nt. 75. See also Morel, "Morfologia delle cupole dipinte da Correggio a Lanfranco," p. 30 nt. 32. Paola Ceschi Lavagetto has suggested that Pordenone's *God the Father* gestures toward the miraculous sculpture on the high altar, but as a means of underlining its preeminence within the space and relating it to the prophecy of the Incarnation in particular. See Ceschi Lavagetto, "L'opera pittorica in Santa Maria di Campagna," pp. 45-46.

that the frame Titian's workshop created for the painting similarly suggests a desire to align the miraculous potency of the cult image with Titian's brush (figure 187).[71] At Piacenza, the cross-spatial dynamic staged between the cult statue and the prophets of the dome proposes an implicit phenomenology of revelation, one in which a poetic artifice of sensational *affetti* and *terribilissimi scurzi* is conscripted to simulate an experience of the sacred.

At the same time, the dome's framework intercepts the illusion of continuity and thus one of the mechanisms by which beholders may arrive at an intuition of divine revelation. This is not to say that the overlaying framework and the imagery that crowds its surface break or dispel the illusion of continuity, but that such imagery operates according to a different register of pictorial illusionism and one that presents a competing claim on the viewer's attention. As we shall see, the framework not only provided Pordenone with an obvious way of distinguishing his dome from those by Correggio, but also offered him a means of exploring the capacity of ornament to inspire open-ended discourse about the inscrutability of God.

Engineered Ambivalence

The sheer size of the ribs that delineate the octants of the dome grants the framework an assertive material presence and affirms the importance of Zacchetti's dome in the succession of a local approach to dome painting that pays lip service to Roman pictorial conceits. However, unlike Zacchetti's loggia or the armature Raphael designed for the Chigi Chapel, Pordenone's framework is so encrusted with natural and fantastic imagery that it does not function simply as a framing device that directs the viewer's

[71] Christopher Nygren, *Vibrant Icons: Titian's Art and the Tradition of Christian Image-Making*, 2 vols., PhD. Dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore 2011, I, pp. 91-101.

attention elsewhere, but as a series of paintings that may be appreciated in their own right. As noted in the previous chapter, frames in early modern Italy typically connoted a circumscribed notion of space, one that posits its existence as a boundary that separates the viewer from the viewed or the work of art from its environment. Pordenone problematizes this conception of the frame by loading it with figural content that presumably inhabits a space in front of it (figures 122, 143, 146-153). As at Cremona, the stacking of illusion on top of illusion puts pressure on art's mimetic limitations and the simultaneous perception of surface and three-dimensional illusion, but here the conceit has changed by loading the frame itself with hermetically-dense amalgams of motifs that compete with the contiguous illusion of an infinitely receding heavenly space. In doing so, the ornamented framework raises questions about the status and distinction between what is marginal/*parergon* and central/*ergon* within the dome as a whole.[72] As interdependent agents, the *parergon* enables the *ergon* to be the *ergon*. But here the pictorial conditions under which the *parergon* operates appear under pressure, for the *parergon* does not efface itself or melt away. Instead, it threatens the integrity of the representation by weakening the distinction between what is essential and what is accessory.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that many of the most salient figures are unidentifiable. For example, the number of sibyls might seem to reinforce the idea promoted by modern scholars that the insights proclaimed by them pertain specifically to Christ's Incarnation.[73] This is different from how the predictions of the sibyls were

[72] See Derrida, "Parergon," in *The Truth in Painting,* pp. 15-147
[73] Most recently by Biscontin, "Il fregio del Pordenone in Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza," pp. 65-66; Lavagetto, "L'opera pittorica in Santa Maria di Campagna," p. 45; and Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 294.

traditionally set forth and might suggest the influence of another Roman source of inspiration. The sibylline prophecies recorded by Lactantius refer to the whole of Christ's life and Augustine focused on Christ's Passion and the Last Judgment.[74] By contrast, the Latin epigrams devised for the twelve sibyls of the Orsini cycle in Rome presented entirely new prophecies that foretell only the Incarnation.[75] These prophecies, which circulated widely after 1481, focus on the arrival of a Messianic ruler but also stress the importance of a virgin mother. For example, in Barbieri's *Discordantiae* Erythraea predicts that "humanity will be married to divinity…and by the service of a maiden a god and man will be reared," and Libyca announces that "They shall see the king of the living; a virgin queen of the nations shall hold him in her lap…and the womb of his mother shall be the model of all."[76] Given the dedication of the church, the pertinent number of sibyls, and the inclusion of a Marian cycle (as opposed to a Christological cycle) in the drum, Pordenone's oracles could be read, vis-à-vis the Orsinian tradition, as a glorification of the Virgin's role in the restoration of humanity brought about by Christ's Incarnation. Moreover, the realization of their predictions was not only represented on the high altar, but at times miraculously "present" there through the providential operations of the *Madonna di Campagna.* However, depending on how imaginatively one construes the language of prophecy, almost any event of sacred history can be found among the oracles of the prophets. As Charles Dempsey has noted, most large-scale representations of the sibyls from this period tended to blend the Lactantian

[74] The prophecies of the sibyls recorded in Lactantius' *Divinae Institutions* (bks. I, II, IV, VI) are listed in Mâle, *L'art religieux de la fin du Moyen Age en France*, p. 257. For Augustine's discussion of the sibylline oracles see Idem, *The City of God Against the Pagans*, V, bk. 18, ch. 23, pp. 440-451.
[75] Dempsey, *The Early Renaissance and Vernacular Culture*, p. 130.
[76] Recorded and translated in Dotson, "An Augustinian Interpretation of Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling, Part II," p. 427.

and Orsinian traditions indiscriminately, making the role of textual addenda paramount.[77] The absence of legible inscriptions and identifying attributes among Pordenone's prophets and sibyls introduces a level of iconographic indeterminacy such that there is no way of prioritizing one tradition over the other. Such indeterminacy poses a serious interpretive problem and one that extends beyond the inhabitants of the empyrean and the conventions of understanding the reception of the sibylline oracles.

Within the framework, many of the actions performed by the figures are so abbreviated and overcrowded that they often lack definition and boundary. For example, several of the activities performed by the *putti* that abut the monochrome vignettes have no specific textual referent, but the considerable space devoted to them suggests that they are more than "ornamental" or merely "accessory." The lack of referential specificity suggests that their significance is neither narrative nor exclusively symbolic, but rhetorical and affective. As Dempsey has shown, such "spirited pictorial animations" could participate as expressive essences of guileless joy or demonstrations of artistic variation.[78] As such, the concepts and sensations they embody cannot be limited to the dynamic of prophecy and fulfillment enacted between the oracles and the cult statue. These observations are not intended to discredit prior interpretations but emphasize the ambiguity that inheres within the visual order of the dome paintings and the impropriety of approaching them as if they constituted a straightforward program or offered a clear hierarchy of content.

The cupola's decorations are arranged in such a way as to suggest a rationally-conceived ensemble and a procedure by which to interpret it. At the same time, numerous

[77] Dempsey, *The Early Renaissance and Vernacular Culture*, p. 337, nt. 24.
[78] See Charles Dempsey, *Inventing the Renaissance Putto* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), pp. xii-xv, 28-34, 43-54, 94-95.

components – such as the *putto* frightened by a ghoulish head or another confronted by a monkey – defy systematic relation or maintain something of their own autonomy within the larger exposition of God's self-disclosure (figures 188-189).[79] Such elements do not reduce the status of the framework's imagery to inchoate visual "noise," but signal a concern with the relationship between substance and ornament in which the latter is conceived as something more than trivial. Encompassing naturalism and artistic caprice, the ornamented framework appeals to the body of ideals that shaped Renaissance perceptions of *pitture grottesche*.[80] And like such decorations, the peculiar aggregations of forms do not communicate a single proposition, but function allusively and flexibly, rendering sensible what Philippe Morel has called "the infinite effervescence of universal nature."[81] This is to say that the contrived ambiguity that attends the imagery – manifest in iconographical indeterminacies, indistinct forms, and puzzling juxtapositions (such as the alignment of *Noah's Ark* with *Tomyris beheading Cyrus*) – continually defers beholders in their struggle to access the truth these paintings point toward.

A Hermeneutics of Divination

In early sixteenth-century Italy, grotesques such as those that inhabit the ornamented framework were understood as calculated infringements against reason. And yet, such bizarre congeries of pictorial fantasy were not dismissed as examples of empty

[79] Cf. Alexander Nagel's discussion of the Sistine Chapel ceiling *ignudi* in *The Controversy of Renaissance Art*, p. 235-236.

[80] See Dorothea Scholl, *Von den „Grottesken" zum Grotesken: Die Konstituierung einer Poetik des Grotesken in der italienischen Renaissance* (Münster: Lit, 2004); Philippe Morel, *Les grotesques: les figures de l'imaginaire dans la peinture italienne de la fin de la Renaissance* (Paris: Flammarion, 1997); Rudolf Wittkower, "Hieroglyphs in the Early Renaissance," in *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1977), pp. 113-128; Nicole Dacos, *La découverte de la Domus Aurea et la formation des grotesques à la Renaissance* (London: Warburg Institute, 1969).

[81] "…*l'effervescence infinie de la nature universelle*," in Morel, *Les grotesques*, p. 6. See also Michel Jeanneret, *Perpetual Motion: Transforming Shapes in the Renaissance from Da Vinci to Montaigne*, trans. Nidra Poller (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), esp. pp. 137-143.

caprice, but greatly desired as a form of modern *all'antica* painting with a seemingly limitless capacity for invention and for their potential to transmit encrypted messages or veiled truths. One such believer in the latter function of *grottesche* was Pirro Ligorio, who sometime after 1568 described the value of such decorations in his manuscript encyclopedia of antiquities (now in Turin):

> "Therefore in whatever way such pictures are discovered, as we have observed, and if to the vulgar people they look like fantastic materials, all were symbols and ingenious things, not made without mystery. […] Thus we must believe that the *pitture grottesche* of the pagans are not without meaning, and are contrived by some fine *ingegno*, philosophically, and poetically represented, since, as we have been able to see, in the same ancient pictures are subjects of consonance and conformity. They parallel one another like a palinode of responses and correspondences; and composed like *tereomati* (?), of things figured by the gods, in the marvels and in the high and deep causes in order to give understanding of perfect things with the imperfect, and the gloomy and the imaginative, the concepts that amplify cognition of the causes of things. And so hieroglyphic letters have been used to signify in small principles various events that contain the things of mundane governments, those of the greatest powers, and imperial deeds and commands, as the states are disposed in the accidents and causes of human life."[82]

[82] "*Hor dunque in qualunque moto si scorgono pitture tali, secondo havemo osservato, e se bene al vulgo pareno materie fantastiche, tutte erano simboli, et cose industriose, non fatte senza misterio. [...] La onde havemo da credere, che le pitture grottesche de gentili non siano senza significatione, et ritrovate da qualche bello ingegno, philosophico, et poeticamente rappresentate, imperò che secondo havemo potuto vedere nelle istesse antiche pitture, sono di soggetto di consonantia, et conformemente sono paralelle a guisa d'una palinodia per replicate et correspondenti; et compose secondo gli tereomati, delle cose degli iddii figurate, nelle maraviglie et nelle cause alte et profonde per dare ad intendere le cose perfette, con le*

Far from merely decoration, Ligorio describes *grottesche* as a kind of ur-language that by means of sensibly perceived and poetically contrived symbols the hidden workings of nature are disclosed.[83] His mention of hieroglyphic letters in grotesque painting suggests the rarified nature of such communication and several of the examples he discusses elsewhere in the manuscript betray the influence of Horapollo and Pierio Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica* (1556).[84] What is perhaps most telling about Ligorio's characterization of *grottesche* is his concern with the etiology of natural phenomena. Pordenone, of course, was working well before the first appearance of the term *grottesca* in sixteenth-century Italian art theoretical literature and its subsequent interpolation by Lomazzo and in post-Tridentine commentaries.[85] But the belief that one could gain some access to ultimate truths through the interpretation of cryptic pictographs was already popular at the turn of the century and examples abound in Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499). For instance, following a ballet at the residence of Queen Eleuterylida, the protagonist Poliphilo, is led through some gardens by two noble ladies where he

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imperfette, et le nere, et le imaginative, gli concetti, che ingrandiscano le cognitioni della cause nelle cose. Onde ad uso di lettere hierogliphiche fatte, come per significare in ciò varii avvenimenti negli piccioli principii, che hanno le cose delli governi terreni quelle delle grandissime potentie, et nelli fatti et nelli comandamenti imperatorii, come sono disposti gli stati, nell'accidenti et cause della vita humana," Turin, Archivio di Stato, MS J.a.111.10, vol. VIII, fol. 151v, 153v, reproduced in Dacos, *La découverte de la Domus Aurea et la formation des grotesques à la Renaissance*, pp. 162, 165. Caterina Volpi transcribed the same passage, spelling *tereomati* as *Ieromati*, which might suggest *ieromanzia* or hieromancy (an art of divining from the observation of objects used in religious sacrifices) in "Catalogo e apparato critico," in *Il Libro dei disegni di Pirro Ligorio all'Archivio di Stato di Torino*, ed. C. Volpi (Rome: Edizione dell'Elefante, 1994), p. 78. See also David R. Coffen, "Pirro Ligorio and Decoration of the Late Sixteenth Century at Ferrara," *Art Bulletin*, v. 37, n. 3 (1955), pp. 167-185, esp. 182-185.

[83] For more on the Renaissance understanding of grotesques as an ancient original language see Scholl, *Von den "Grottesken" zum Grotesken*, p. 264f.

[84] Cf. Coffen, "Pirro Ligorio and Decoration of the Late Sixteenth Century at Ferrara," p. 183.

[85] According to Helmut Wohl, the earliest known references to *grottesche* in sixteenth-century Italian art theory are found in Doni's *Disegno* (1549) and *La Zucca* (1551). Wohl, *The Aesthetics of Italian Renaissance Art*, p. 216. Two of the most important commentaries on grotesques by ecclesiastics include Gilio da Fabriano's *Dialogo nel quale si ragione degli errori e degli abusi de' pittori circa l'istoria* (1564) and Gabriele Paleotti's *Discorso intorno alle imagine sacre et profane* (1582). For the relevant passages see Paola Barocchi, ed., *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento fra manierismo e Controriforma*, 3 vols. (Bari: Laterza, 1960-1962), II, p. 18-19, 432-433. For Lomazzo's theorization of *pitture grottesche* see Scholl, *Von den "Grottesken" zum Grotesken*, p. 465ff.

encounters an obelisk. The monument is assembled from a variety of luxury materials and covered on each side with statues, cornucopias, Greek letters, hieroglyphic characters, and a "*monstro aegyptio*." While contemplating the object, one of the ladies, Logistica, explains that:

> "The celestial harmony is in these figures. Take note, Poliphilo, that these figures, with their perpetual affinity and conjunction, are noble antique monuments and Egyptian hieroglyphs, whose hidden message tells you this: TO THE DIVINE AND INFINITE TRINITY, ONE IN ESSENCE."[86]

The attempt to reconcile mythological and hieroglyphic concepts with Christian doctrine is typical of such interpretations, as is Logistica's subsequent admonition:

> "Do not think my explanation prolix, Poliphilo, but rather brief… Although it seems somewhat transparent to humans, it is not totally clear to us….Here even the best informed can learn no more than that the thing is; but as to what it is, they remain ignorant, impotent, and incompetent."[87]

Logistica's warning makes plain the elusive nature of such imagery and the idea that the hidden truths to which they allude are only partially accessible.[88] In Parma, hieroglyphics from the *Hypnerotomachia* were used to substitute the epitaph in a design for Canon Vincenzo Carissimi's sepulcher (ca. 1520).[89] The imagery consists of a zoomorphic helmet, a bucranium with branches affixed to its horns, and a lamp shaped like a bird

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[86] Francesco Colonna, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, trans. Joscelyn Godwin (orig. pub. Venice, 1499; London: Thames and Hudson, 1999), p. 129.
[87] Ibid., p. 130.
[88] For more on Colonna's use of hieroglyphs see Giovanni Pozzi, "Les Hieroglyphes de l'Hypnerotomachia Poliphili," in *L'Emblème à la Renaissance*, ed. Yve Giraud (Paris: Société d'Edition d'Enseignement Supérieur, 1980), pp. 15-28.
[89] See Alessandra Talignani, "*Quis Evadet*. Una traccia dell'Hypernotomachia Poliphili a Parma nel sepolcro di Vincenzo Carissimi," *Artes*, v. 5 (1997), pp. 111-137. The funerary monument was built without the inscription.

(figures 190 and 191). The meaning of this specific cluster of condensed forms is provided in Colonna's romance: PATENTIA EST ORNAMENTUM CUSTODIA ET PROTECTIO VITAE ("Patience is the ornament, guardian, and protection of life").[90] It has been argued that the adoption of this hieroglyphic inscription for Carissimi's funerary monument indicates that within the humanistically-oriented circle of the canon's *parmese* friends, hieroglyphic signs were viewed as a language that expressed concepts in discursive form. The same kind of discursive reasoning has also been shown to underlie the decorations Alessandro Araldi (1514) and Correggio (1518-1519) executed for the Benedictine Convento di San Paolo in Parma.[91] Strictly speaking, the amalgams of motifs and vignettes that crowd the framework of Pordenone's cupola are not hieroglyphic characters, but they encourage a similar hermeneutics that presupposes the possibility of gaining insight into divine wisdom or, as Ligorio put it, "the causes of things," through the contemplation of such ornaments.[92] This mode of interpretation has nothing to do with actual Egyptian hieroglyphs (which were logographic and phonetic), but was developed in the writings of classical authors and granted new currency in early modern Italy through the efforts of Poggio Bracciolini, Niccolo de' Niccoli, Marsilio Ficino, and others.[93] An important example of this line of thinking for Italian humanists was found in the fifth book of the *Enneads* when Plotinus argues:

> "If anyone despises the arts because they produce their works by imitating nature, we must tell him, first, that natural things are imitations too. Then he must know

[90] Colonna, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1999), p. 69.
[91] See Giancarla Periti, *Antonio Allegri of Correggio: Private Art, Reception and Theories of Invention in Early Sixtenth-Century Emilian Painting*, 2 vols., PhD. Dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore 2003, esp. chapter 3 in vol. I, pp. 136-223 (pp. 176-182 for how hieroglyphics were understood in Renaissance Parma).
[92] Dacos, *La découverte de la Domus Aurea et la formation des grotesques à la Renaissance*, p. 165.
[93] See Wittkower, "Hieroglyphs in the Early Renaissance," pp. 113-128; and Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958), pp. 169-170.

that the arts do not simply imitate what they see, but they run back up to the forming principles from which nature derives."[94]

As mentioned above, Pordenone's ornamental repertory encompasses more than ancient *grottesche*. The plenitude of Christian and non-Christian subjects, natural and fantastic motifs, and diversity of materials suggests a desire to imitate all of nature's *materia*: subject, substance, and form. The belief that nature itself could be read like a discursive language of symbols that points back to its divine author was pervasive in the Christian West and found one of its most sustained articulations in the all-enveloping metaphor of the Book of Nature.[95] In early modern Italy, this metaphor relied on a hermeneutical and metaphysical understanding of nature rooted in scripture: "…ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made" (Rom. 1:20).[96] The semiotic understanding of nature as the product of divine authorship implies that by reading the Book of Nature – that is, by interpreting the sensorially-perceived world as a meaningful ordering of signs or metaphysical index – one could discover something of God's wisdom. However, the Book of Nature is not filled with logical statements, but with enigmas and obscure portents, the elucidation of which can never grant precise knowledge of what God is. Rather, it is only by asking "in what manner they [visible signs] exist or for what purpose they exist," as Nicholas of Cusa relates, that one may begin to recognize God's infinity and transcendence.[97] Thus in the context of natural

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[94] Plotinus, *Enneads*, trans. Arthur H. Armstrong (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1966), V.8.1, p. 239

[95] See Hans Blumenberg, *Die Lesbarkeit der Welt* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981), esp. pp. 47-67.

[96] See the various essays in Arjo Vanderjagt and Klaas van Berkel, eds., *The Book of Nature in Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005).

[97] Jasper Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa On Learned Ignorance: a Translation and Appraisal of De Docta Ignorantia*, 2nd Ed. (Minneapolis: Arthur J. Banning, 1985), p. 124.

theology, discursive reasoning functions as a means to an unattainable end, but not without return. Moreover, the idea of nature as a kind of hieroglyphic alluding to the quiddity of a thing resonates with the thinking that underlies Ligorio's claim about ancient *grottesche* figuring the "accidents and causes of human life" and offers a productive means of thinking about the function of ornament in Pordenone's cupola.[98]

Appearing chaotic and structured at once, the vitality of Pordenone's decorations depends on their flexibility as symbolic vehicles and the wide range of emotions they could stimulate. Given the preceding observations about the Book of Nature and ancient *grottesche*, how might one attempt to unravel some of their complexity? One potential avenue appears to be thematized by the action performed by one of the first figures to greet visitors to the sanctuary: Pordenone's frescoed altarpiece of *Saint Augustine Enthroned* (ca. 1533-1535) (figure 170). Located on the left wall when entering the church, this rather large fresco (approx. 260 x 170cm), presents an image of the saint placed amongst the emblems of his Episcopal office and surrounded by a group of attendant *putti* who hold aloft immense manuscripts for his perusal. With arms flung wide, the saint gestures toward two separate codices. Pressing his fingertips determinedly against precise areas of the pages, Augustine appears to have pinpointed a relation or correspondence within the texts of the two books. This is to say that Augustine physically enacts a textual concordance for the beholder towards whom he directs his penetrating gaze. Aided by angelic attendants and divorced from any recognizable historical context, the moment depicted does not correspond in any specific way to the recorded events of

[98] Dacos, *La découverte de la Domus Aurea et la formation des grotesques à la Renaissance*, p. 165.

the saint's life.[99] Rather than providing insight into his life then, the fresco can be said to function demonstratively: presenting a comparison of texts, the saint demonstrates a process of extrapolating the true and fuller *sensus* from different verbal surfaces. The action that Augustine performs furnishes an indication of the particular interpretive disposition that Pordenone's dome paintings presuppose. This is not to say that the painting of *Saint Augustine Enthroned* provides the hermeneutic "key" to some kind of iconographic program, but that it advocates a particular kind of interaction and one that relies on the consistent deferment of an ultimate revelation.

Confronted with the astounding diversity and abundance of imagery adorning the central cupola, visitors to the church of Santa Maria di Campagna found themselves faced with some of the same problems that attend the cross-referencing and typological thinking characteristic of scriptural exegesis. Even though the range of subjects within the dome extends beyond the purview of scripture, the interpretive difficulties that Pordenone's paintings engender are not unlike those articulated in Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana* (begun ca. 396). In this fundamental work, Augustine provided exegetical principles for the interpretation and exposition of scripture, employing an allegorical method, rather than a philological or historical one, to demonstrate how one could approach an intellectual recognition of the "invisible things" of God through "the things that are made."[100] In the sixteenth century, the theory of signs that Augustine developed in the treatise's second book was particularly important for theologians

[99] Usually images of Augustine dressed as a bishop and seated amongst books represent the apocryphal vision of Jerome appearing to Augustine at the moment of the former's death. The representation of this vision typically shows the saint alone in his study, pausing in the act of writing to look off into the distance with an air of dreamy introspection as a supernatural light bathes his countenance. See Meredith J. Gill, *Augustine in the Italian Renaissance: Art and Philosophy from Petrarch to Michelangelo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), esp. pp. 128-129, 139-140.
[100] Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, bk. 1, ch. 4, p. 10.

seeking to defend the spiritual sense of scripture and offers a rationale for the contrived ambiguity of some of Pordenone's decorations.

While acknowledging that Augustine identified the signs of words, not pictures, as the means of discovering and disseminating divine will, sixteenth-century iconophiles did not hesitate to extend his theory of signs to include images.[101] Much like the exegete, Christian beholders believed that the will of God acted through the various authors that contributed to and disseminated the story of salvation. The purpose of reading these authors (or viewing their pictorial translation) was, as Augustine relates, "to find in it nothing more than the thoughts and desires of those who wrote it and through these the will of God."[102] However, such an ambition was impeded in several ways.[103] One such impediment to penetrating to the will of God was the necessity of sifting through various human intentions, which generated no small amount of obscurity. Due to differences in language (verbal or pictorial), culture, historical awareness, and structures of thought, uncertainties about the intention behind a text (or image) abound. The opacity of scripture, moreover, is explained as the product of human sin, particularly that of pride, and tied to the plurality of languages that followed from the Tower of Babel.[104] The resultant obscurity is further exacerbated by those ensnared by their own heedless presumption:

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[101] For Augustine's attitude toward images see Ibid., bk. 2, ch. 25, pp. 61-62; and the discussion in Anne Dunlop, "Black Humour: the Cappellone at Tolentino," in *Art and the Augustinian Order in Early Renaissance Italy*, eds. Louise Bourdua and Anne Dunlop (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 79-98, esp. pp. 93-97. For the sixteenth-century applications of Augustinian concepts to pictorial images see Esther Gordon Dotson, "An Augustinian Interpretation of Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling, Part I," *Art Bulletin*, v. 61, n. 2 (1979), pp. 223-256; and Gill, *Augustine in the Italian Renaissance*, esp. pp. 177-183.

[102] Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, bk. 2, ch. 5, pp. 36-37.

[103] What follows draws on Terence Cave's discussion of *De doctrina* in *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), pp. 78-83.

[104] Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, bk. 2, ch. 4, p. 36.

> "But many and varied obscurities and ambiguities deceive those who read casually, understanding one thing instead of another; indeed, in certain places they do not find anything to interpret even erroneously, so obscurely are certain sayings covered with a most dense mist."[105]

Augustine is plainly aware of the pitfalls into which unwary exegetes may be led, but he also recognizes that the conditions under which dissonant voices and inordinate self-esteem guide one another into obscurity may also operate as a necessary curative:

> "I do not doubt that this situation was provided by God to conquer pride by work and to combat disdain in our minds, to which those things which are easily discovered seem frequently to become worthless."[106]

The opacity or non-transparency of Holy Writ chides those who presume to make evident a hidden sense without the discretion that comes from hard work. Considering the connotative abundance and referential ambiguity that inheres within the visual order of Pordenone's dome paintings, as well as the diversity of previous attempts to decode them, I believe this principle operates as one of the underlying objectives of Pordenone's decorations: opacity offers a remedy to an exaggerated sense of self-worth and to the presumption of approaching sacred truth without mediation. At a time when reformers sought to usurp the preeminence of allegory with a literalist view of scripture, Pordenone's decorations conversely uphold the shroud of mystery that "veils truth in a fair and fitting garment."[107] In addition, the process of interpretation that these

[105] Ibid., bk. 2, ch. 6, p. 37.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Giovanni Boccaccio, *Genealogia Deorum Gentilium*, bk. 14, ch. 7, in *Boccaccio on Poetry*, intro. and comm. Charles G. Osgood (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1956), p. 39.

decorations presuppose similarly operates along alternating currents of access and deferment. As Augustine continues:

> "Thus the Holy Spirit has magnificently and wholesomely modulated the Holy Scriptures so that the more open places present themselves to hunger and the more obscure places may deter a disdainful attitude. Hardly anything may be found in these obscure places which is not found plainly said elsewhere."[108]

In describing the process of elucidating obscure places by deferring to clearer ones, Augustine suggests the potentially infinite productivity of the biblical text. This idea is elaborated in book three, where he defends the multivalent character of scripture:

> "When, however, from a single passage in the scripture not one but two or more meanings are elicited, even if what he who wrote the passage intended remains hidden, there is no danger if any of the meanings may be seen to be congruous with the truth taught in other passages of the Holy Scriptures. […] For what could God have more generously and abundantly provided in the divine writings than that the same words might be understood in various ways which other no less divine witnesses approve?"[109]

The capacity of a single passage to indicate a whole range of semantic possibilities – even meanings the author did not intend – presents no danger to Augustine so long as these possibilities can be collated to other passages and contribute to the "love of God and of our neighbor."[110] It is precisely this intention – the magnification of the twofold love – that lies at the heart of Augustine's exegetical practice and sustains such a

[108] Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, bk. 2, ch. 6, p. 38.
[109] Ibid., bk. 3, ch. 27, pp. 101-102.
[110] Ibid., bk. 3, ch. 9, p. 88. Here Augustine refers the reader back to a similar passage on the use of interpretation to generate the "double love" of God and of neighbor in bk. 1, ch. 36, p. 30.

dynamic mode of interpretation. The versatility of the biblical text offers no end to the pleasure that may be enjoyed in pursuing the truth of divine intention. In this way, the *topos* of scriptural non-transparency enjoins deferment as a propagator of discourse. When read as an attempt to convey the plenitude of salvation history, Pordenone's decorations similarly underscore the value of obscurity for deferring resolution and inspiring discourse on sacred truth.

It seems to me, therefore, that the cupola decorations manifest two preoccupations: first, to simulate a powerfully affective experience of revelation through spectacular artifice. And second, to affirm a positive role for ornament – that rather than simply embellish, the framework's referentially flexible motifs foster the shroud of mystery, suggesting that the truth they allude to cannot be detached from the veil of fiction.[111] Ornament as a poetic fiction can also create a sense of wonder, but one that is predicated upon the non-transparency of sacred truth. Taken together, I believe these two preoccupations point to an experiment in which the affective and discursive dimensions of painting are placed alongside one another in an attempt to sound out the revelatory potential of human artifice. Understood in this way, the implicit phenomenology or procedure of achieving an intuition of divine revelation through the illusion of continuity operates in tandem with ornaments that require their own hermeneutics of divination. And this system of interpretation is grounded in the idea that all of nature's *materia* – whether natural or grotesque, pagan or Christian – can be made to point to the astonishing and impenetrable divine nature.

[111] Cf. Boccaccio, *Genealogia Deorum Gentilium*, bk. 14, ch. 7, in *Boccaccio on Poetry*, p. 39.

Pictorial *copia*: Artistic Ambition and the Rhetoric of Abundance

The kind of associative thinking that Pordenone's decorations invite about the revelatory potential of painting are the product of his particular method of composing. In addition to encouraging a hermeneutics rooted in the non-transparency of sacred truth, this method also operates as a means of competitively engaging the art of Parma and Rome. Pordenone's frescoes not only respond to the framing apparatus of Zacchetti's cupola, they also include pointed variations on the decorations adorning the cross vaults, ribs, friezes, *sott'archi*, pendentives, and drums of both Parma cathedral and the church of San Giovanni Evangelista. In this regard, the scope of Pordenone's ambition at Piacenza is simply remarkable. His cupola presents a congregation of the specific types of motifs, subjects, figure poses, decorative configurations, and poetic conceits utilized by Correggio's workshop, manipulating such tropes as synecdoche and metaphor in recognizably similar ways. For instance, the monochrome Old Testament vignettes that adorn the ovoid recesses of each rib are careful adaptations of those found in the *sott'archi* of the crossing at San Giovanni Evangelista (figures 146-153, 192-195). In both cases the figures are represented in imitated metals and the events are so abbreviated that they operate aphoristically for the key narratives in the history of salvation. While the stipulations of Pordenone's original contract are lost, the adoption of this motif is conspicuous – an impression made even more evident by its immediate reappearance in the works by Parmigianino, Michelangelo Anselmi, and Gerolamo Mazzola Bedoli at Santa Maria della Steccata as well as in the soffits by Bernardino Gatti for Santa Maria di Campagna (figures 196-199). Equally conspicuous are the similarities between the particular components and configurations of ornament found in Pordenone's decorative

framework and those found in the *sott'archi* of the first and second chapels on the northwest side of the nave at San Giovanni Evangelista (ca. 1522-23) (figures 200-205). Ascribed to Parmigianino since the eighteenth century, each soffit contains saints of monumental proportions circumscribed by decorative motifs.[112] These motifs and their arrangement find varied expression in the ribs of Pordenone's dome: analogously-congested pilings of gamboling *putti* (of corresponding physiognomy and dynamism) (figures 205 and 206) with fruit-bearing vegetation, armillary spheres, roman cuirasses, empty helmets, grotesque faces, musical instruments, and animals. One can, of course, offer examples of Pordenone's supposed "sources" *ad nauseam.* The point, however, does not lie in stabilizing a point of origin or direction of "influence," but in recognizing how Pordenone's manipulation of his peers' innovations alters their meaning.

Pordenone's selective imitation of Correggio and his workshop (as well as Zacchetti and the art of Rome) is acutely self-aware and intended to draw comparison. The means by which he does so, however, departs from those he employed at Cremona or in his native city. As I argued in the first chapter, the altarpieces Pordenone painted for the church of San Marco evince a subtle deviance from dominant Venetian practices by destabilizing conventions of composition and decorum. He continued to explore similar means of self-differentiation at Cremona, where he subverted the aesthetic imperatives of his Roman and Venetian peers through a critical adaptation of the *maniera moderna* that put pressure on any overt claim to redemptive truth. As mentioned earlier, the strategy of selective imitation and subversion that Pordenone employed in these works reflects a distinctly contaminate aesthetics unconstrained by the obligation of advertising a place of origins. Such a strategy, moreover, bears resemblance to the practices of several

[112] See Mary Vaccaro, *Parmigianino: i dipinti* (Turin: Allemandi, 2002), pp. 129-133.

peripatetic contemporaries such as Cesare da Sesto or Polidoro da Caravaggio and like them his works can be productively compared to literary theories of eclectic imitation and repetition. That said, the claim that Pordenone's performance at Piacenza makes for differentiation does not trade on defilement or the violent transgression of compositional norms. In attempting to negotiate the coexistence of monumental form and ornamental profusion, I believe the various appropriations and oblique references to the works of his Roman and Emilian contemporaries suggests a competitive form of emulation that seeks to excel by means of a visual rhetoric of abundance. Like the lavish ornamental schemes designed by Filippino Lippi, Pinturricchio, and Amico Aspertini, Pordenone was experimenting with an idiom of *all'antica* painting, but the means by which he composes in this idiom also resonates with certain innovations in sixteenth-century rhetorical theory, particularly in exercises for generating *copia*. This is not to say that Pordenone was perusing rhetorical manuals for compositional techniques, but that his preoccupation with pictorial abundance can be seen as a symptom of a more general cultural fixation with ornament and decorum. Within this milieu, analogous concerns can be shown to underlie the expansive richness of literary and pictorial *copia*.

Copia, which belongs to the same semantic domain as *abundantia*, *varietas*, and *opes*, was a familiar concept to sixteenth-century schoolboys seeking devices for diversifying composition.[113] The value of actualizing *copia* lies in its capacity to powerfully affect an audience by activating a net of figurative associations. Unfortunately, the concept, its practice, and its effects are often overlooked by historians of sixteenth-century art, presumably on account of its familiarity from Quattrocento art

[113] See Terence Cave, "Copia and Cornucopia" in *French Renaissance Studies, 1540-70: Humanism and the Encyclopedia*, ed. Peter Sharratt (Edinburgh: University Press, 1976), pp. 52-69; Idem, *The Cornucopian Text*.

theory. For Alberti, *copia* was a contingent value consisting of the "profusion of matter" and would only find admiration if coupled with *varietas,* or "the diversity of matter," and restrained by dignity and modesty.[114] When combined, the copiousness and variety of things is what first brings pleasure to the *historia*.[115] Alberti's understanding of *copia* redresses a medieval deflection of *copia* to mean "copy" and his insistence on the coupling of *copia* with *varietas* reflects the influence of Cicero on fifteenth-century rhetoric.[116] All seven of Cicero's rhetorical works were printed in the second half of the fifteenth century and his letters became a staple of the grammar curriculum as a model for epistolary stylistics.[117] As was typical of fifteenth-century schoolbooks, such as the best-selling *Isagogicus libellus* (or *Elegantiolae*) by Agostino Dati, the imitation of Cicero was advocated as a means of achieving elegance through the diversification of expression.[118] But for Dati, as for Alberti, variety and the means of accumulating it were species of style (*elocutio*). What is absent from these fifteenth-century treatises is any

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[114] Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 133-134. See also Wohl, *The Aesthetics of Italian Renaissance Art*, p. 63.

[115] "*Primum enim quod in historia voluptatem afferat est ipsa copia et varietas rerum*," Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting and On Sculpture: the Latin Texts of* De pictura *and* De statua, ed. and trans. Cecil Grayson (London: Phaidon, 1972), *De pictura*, bk. 1, ch. 40, p. 78.

[116] For Cicero's disapproval of *copia* without *varietas* see Cave, *The Cornucopian Text*, p. 5 n. 7.

[117] For more on the influence of Cicero in fifteenth-century rhetoric see Izora Scott, *Controversies Over the Imitation of Cicero* (New York: Columbia University, 1910), pp. 3-22; James Murphy, "Ciceronian Influences in Latin Rhetorical Compendia of the Fifteenth Century," in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Guelpherbytani: Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies*, ed. Stella P. Revard et al. (Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval & Early Renaissance Studies, State University of New York, 1988), pp. 521-530; Robert Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy: Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), esp. pp. 352-357.

[118] Agostino Dati's *Isagogicus libellus* was first published in 1470 at Cologne by Ulrich Zell and in 1471 and 1475 at Ferrara by André Belfort. Before 1500 it was reprinted nine times in Milan, about seventeen times (in various forms) in Venice and in many other cities throughout Italy. It continued to be published throughout the sixteenth century and into the seventeenth century. For a discussion of this work in the context of other fifteenth-century manuals of Latin style see Black, *Humanism and Education,* pp. 359-364. For the various editions see Lawrence Green and James Murphy, *Renaissance Rhetoric Short-Title Catalogue 1460-1700*, 2nd ed. (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 154-158. See also Christopher S. Celenza, "Petrarch, Latin, and Italian Renaissance Latinity," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, v. 35, n. 3 (2005), pp. 509-536, esp. p. 519.

discussion of *copia*'s inventive potential or role in generating propositions. As Terence Cave has shown, in antiquity the storehouse of abundance was understood to constitute "a set of places (*topoi*, *loci*) in which arguments may be found" and was thus closely tied to *inventio*, or the discovery of arguments.[119] This particular understanding of *copia* was not fully revived until the sixteenth century.

While such works as Rudolphus Agricola's *De inventione dialectica* (written 1479, published 1515) or Desiderius Erasmus's *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum* (1512) differ in terms of their aims and approach, both award a privileged place to the art of *copia* as a means of invention. As such, they represent an important innovation in the use and value of *copia*, and one they helped to disseminate.[120] For Agricola, *copia* was an objective of dialectical method (the method of using topical logic to locate propositions), but also something that eclipsed it in that *copia* has the potential to elaborate discourse by other means, such as "moving the affections" of an audience.[121] For Erasmus, *copia* denoted both a principle of stylistic amplification and of imitation, emphasizing the idea that authentic plenitude in expression did not lie in simple verbal expansion, but in inventive and creative fullness devoid of redundancy or indiscriminate loquacity.[122] Erasmus' concerns, moreover, are not restricted to style, for his treatise shows how the art of abundance overlaps with the development of subject matter (*copia rerum*). This is achieved through the adaptation of *exempla* by various means of fragmentation and multiplication. For example, the fifth method of developing subject matter amplifies the

[119] Cave, *The Cornucopian Text*, p. 6.
[120] For the editions of Agricola's and Erasmus' works see Green and Murphy, *Renaissance Rhetoric Short-Title Catalogue*, pp. 5-7 & 185-188.
[121] Cave, *The Cornucopian Text*, pp. 12-18 (p. 15 for the quote).
[122] For the crime of redundancy and loquacity see Desiderius Erasmus, *De copia verborum ac rerum*, ed. Betty I. Knott, in *Opera Omnia* (North Holland: Amsterdam, 1988), Ordo 1, v. 6, bk. 1, ch. 4, p. 32. See also Cave, *The Cornucopian Text*, p. 21; John Lyons, "In the Folds of the Renaissance Text. Review of *The Cornucopian Text* by Terence Cave," *Diacritics*, v. 13, n. 3 (1983), pp. 32-43, esp. pp. 34-35.

statement "*Bellum tibi acceptum feremus*" (We will charge the war to your account) by enumerating concomitant and resultant consequences. Such consequences precede the statement in question and are arranged so that the sequence builds to a *crescendo*:

> "A treasury exhausted against barbarian soldiers, a youth broken by hardships, crops trampled underfoot, herds driven off, burned villages and farms everywhere, fields lying in waste, overturned walls, looted homes, pillaged shrines, so many childless old people, so many orphaned children, so many widowed matrons, so many virgins shamefully outraged, the character of so many young people ruined by license, such great sorrow, such great grief, so many tears, and moreover, the extinction of the arts, oppressive laws, the obliteration of religion, the chaos of all things human and divine, the government of the state corrupted, this whole array of evils that arises from war, I say, we shall lay to your charge alone, since indeed you were the author of the war."[123]

Here the amplification of subject matter employs many of the tropes of style recommended in book one of *De copia*: metonymy ("a youth broken by hardships"), varying by comparatives ("so many childless old people, so many orphaned children"), asyndeton (the omission of conjunctions to increase rhythm), hyperbole ("the chaos of all things human and divine"), and so on. By treating a selection of *exempla* as fragments of discourse, Erasmus shows his readers how they can be variously transposed to create new texts. The effect is overwhelming and gratuitous, and the intention, as Cave has argued, is that the figures of rhetorical *mutatio* will become a generative series activating the

[123] Desiderius Erasmus, *On copia of words and ideas*, trans. Donald B. King and H. David Rix (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1963), p. 47; for the Latin see Erasmus, *De copia verborum ac rerum,* bk. 2, "*quarta ratio*", p. 202.

potential nuances of an expression to create an open-ended "feast of the mind."[124] The generation of such a feast depends on the author/orator having a ready store of *exempla* compiled from classical literature and scripture.[125]

In Italy the debates surrounding the pedagogy of rhetorical theory were coupled with the controversies over the development of a dominant literary language and, as elsewhere in Europe, radically changed under the market pressures of the printing industry.[126] The ensuing competition among rhetoricians over how one should achieve the appropriate richness or amplification of expression necessary for eloquence led to such a proliferation of texts that the scope of rhetorical developments, even for the incunabular period, is remarkably broad and only partially understood.[127] There is

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[124] Cave, *The Cornucopian Text,* pp. 24-25.

[125] For Erasmus' method of collecting *exempla* see *De copia verborum ac rerum*, bk. 2, "*Ratio colligendi exempla*", pp. 258-269. In *De copia*, bk 1, ch 11, lines 387-39, Erasmus associates himself with the eclectics: "*Caeterum quemadmodum iure laudatur illorum institutum, qui sese ad illius / felicissimi seculi imitationem componunt, ita non probarim quosdam qui ceu / barbarum horrent quod in his posterioribus reperiunt; praesertim quum fieri / possit, vt quod hic refugiunt apud M. Tullium fuerit in libris quos desidera- / mus*. (But just as I approve the practice of those who are disposed to imitation of the former most beautiful age [the Ciceronian age], so I do not approve some who shudder at what they find in these later writers as barbarous [those who differed from Cicero], especially since it is possible that what they flee here was in Cicero, in books that we do not have.)" See Erasmus, *De copia verborum ac rerum*, p. 46 (and Knotts' commentary on page 47); translation in *On copia of words and ideas*, p. 22. A more precise description of Erasmus' position on imitation can be found in a letter to Francisco de Vergara dated 13 October 1527. There Erasmus exclaimed that: "Finally, if the truth may be spoken, even among those who have no other model than Cicero no one up to now has reproduced a faithful likeness of him. I have no regard for an empty veneer of language and a dozen words borrowed here and there from Cicero. I look for the spirit of Cicero in its totality. With these words, my dear Francisco, I do not propose some other model in preference to Cicero for those who aspire to eloquence. They are meant only to ridicule those apes who consider nothing beautiful that does not recall Cicero. There was never anything of such perfect beauty that it left nothing to be desired. *As the painter with form so the orator with words should seek his absolute model from among many*." [emphasis mine] Reproduced in Charles Fantazzi, trans., *The Correspondence of Erasmus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), vol. 13, Letters 1802 to 1925, March-December 1527, p. 367.

[126] See, for example, the dispute between Gian Francesco Pico and Pietro Bembo in Joann Neva, ed. *Ciceronian Controversies*, trans. Brian Duvick (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2007), esp. pp. 16-43 & 90-125; McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation in the Italian Renaissance,* pp. 249-274. On the influence of the print industry see Elizabeth Eisenstein *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), I, pp. 43-159.

[127] See in particular James Murphy, "One Thousand Neglected Authors: The Scope and Importance of Renaissance Rhetoric," in *Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric*, ed. James Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 20-36.

consensus, however, that during the first few decades of the sixteenth century and even after the publication of Bembo's *Prose della volgar lingua* (1525), a number of different theoretical positions were lauded and highly diversified experiments were conducted.[128] Within this rapidly-changing cultural context, rhetorical teaching that embraced eclecticism in both style and models was not exceptional – nor marginalizing – as the writings of Gianfrancesco Pico, Poliziano, and others attest.[129]

The exercises that Erasmus utilized to illustrate forms of amplification were not entirely new: much of his material was prefigured in the writings of Dati as well as Lorenzo Valla, Niccolò Perotti, Albrecht von Eyb, and others.[130] These writings affirm a sustained desire for the kind of conceptual feast that the art of abundance could engender. In fact, the popularity of this art may be said to reflect a widespread aesthetic disposition, one that took pleasure in identifying the repetition of *topoi* and the different referential layers that might arise through their recontextualization in diverse places for diverse purposes.[131] This disposition extended far beyond Latin rhetoric: the virtuoso manipulation of sources and the preoccupation with syntactical and figurative abundance was common to sixteenth-century vernacular writers on both sides of the Alps. One could

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[128] Various defenses of Latin and of composite vernaculars continued for a while after the publication of the *Prose*. Examples include Gian Giorgio Trissino's translation of Dante's *De vulgari Eloquentia* (1529) and the 1529 oration of the humanist Romolo Amaseo. More ambivalent is Sperone Speroni's *Dialogo delle Lingue* (1530). See Robert A. Hall, *The Italian questione della lingua: an Interpretive Essay* (Chapel Hill, 1942), pp.16-17. The literature on Pietro Bembo and his position in the *questione della lingua* is vast. A few of the more basic studies include Maurizio Vitale, *La questione della lingua* (Palermo 1964), pp. 33-36; Carlo Dionisotti, "Introduzione" in *Prose e rime* (Turin: Unione tipografico-editrice torinese, 1966), pp. 9-56; Idem, "Introduzione alle «Prose della volgar lingua»," in *Scritti sul Bembo*, ed. Claudio Vela (Turin: Einaudi, 2002), pp. 207-232.

[129] For the positions of these authors and more see Scott, *Controversies Over the Imitation of Cicero,* pp. 10-23; Vitale, *La questione della lingua,* pp. 36-47; McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation in the Italian Renaissance*, pp.126-145, 187-227, 249-274.

[130] For Erasmus' antecedents see Betty I. Knotts, "Introduction," in *De copia verborum ac rerum*, pp. 10-19.

[131] Cf. Maria H. Loh, "New and Improved: Repetition as Originality in Italian Baroque Practice and Theory," *Art Bulletin*, v. 86, n. 3 (2004), pp. 477-504.

argue, moreover, that the delight taken by observers in discovering a reference within the fabric of a composition – of exercising discrimination and demonstrating one's erudition – allows the effects of *copia* to transcend differences in register between Latin and vernacular composition as well as between language and the visual arts. For beholders who recognized Pordenone's eclectic borrowings, an added pleasure sprung from his or her ability to partake in an inter-representational dialogue.[132]

Such satisfaction could arise from recognizing in Pordenone's decorations the network constructed through the various iterations of the monochrome *tondi* or even the shared iconography of prophets and sibyls – subjects that not only occupy the perimeter of Michelangelo's ceiling but also Zacchetti's cupola and the nave frieze of San Giovanni Evangelista in Parma (figures 174, 176, 207). In each case, Pordenone's *exempla* are inserted into new contexts and "rewritten" in various ways to create new relations that weaken recognition of an attributable source. It should be stressed that none of Pordenone's decorations are exact copies of other artworks, but variations of different types that are then reconfigured according to his own designs and purposes. Pordenone's monochrome *tondi*, for example, are not imposed on top of a monotonous pattern of fictive coffers as they are at San Giovanni Evangelista, but illusionistically recessed into the center of each of the dome's ribs so that they contrast in terms of the direction of projection with the adjacent *putti*, vegetation, and other motifs. With one exception, the subjects of Pordenone's *tondi* also differ from those by Correggio and, if we include the vignettes that adorn the frieze above the drum, proceed from scripture to include subjects from ancient history. In other words, Pordenone's manipulation of this type of motif

[132] This is comparable to what Maria Loh has suggested about *Seicento* "demonstrative repetition." Idem, *Titian Remade: Repetition and the Transformation of Early Modern Italian Art*, p. 53.

included amplifying the range of subject matter, reversing the illusion's projection, multiplying its appearance, and diversifying the context in which it is found. This is just one example, but the various means by which Pordenone "rewrites" the monochrome *tondi* echoes some of the traditional literary devices for diversifying expression. Such means also suggest that Pordenone's engagement with the art of Correggio and his cohort has little to do with the suppression of his artistic self. Instead, the abundance and diversity of imagery and figurative associations found in Pordenone's dome suggests that the artist treated the recent innovations of his Emilian contemporaries as *exempla* to be compiled and transformed into resources for generating pictorial *copia* and the impression of his own creative inexhaustibility.

The dangers that can accompany the pursuit of such an impression were well known to artists: in the *Codice Urbinate* Leonardo da Vinci warned painters that an excessive abundance of ornamentation would "obscure the form and attitude of the figures or the essential form of the objects."[133] When taken to the extreme, therefore, abundance could lead to a disarticulation or obscurity of symbolic and syntactic relations. In the sixteenth century, however, such vagaries had their own attraction. The taste for obscurity is familiar to historians of early sixteenth-century art, but the poetic license artists employed to appeal to it is most often characterized by processes of poetic refinement, such as abridgment (brevity), substitution, and grafting.[134] Pordenone's decorations for the central cupola of Santa Maria di Campagna suggest that the

[133] Leonardo da Vinci, *Treatise on Painting*, ed. A. Philip McMahon, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), I, p. 275, II, fol. 60v, translated in Wohl, *The Aesthetics of Italian Renaissance Art,* p. 62.

[134] See, for example, Stephen J. Campbell, "Naturalism and Venetian "*Poesia*": Grafting, Metaphor, and Embodiment in Giorgione, Titian, and the Campagnolas" pp.115-142; Anderson*, Giorgione: The Painter of 'Poetic Brevity,'* esp. pp. 17-49; Gilbert, "On Subject and Not-Subject in Italian Renaissance Pictures," pp. 202-216.

generation of connotative abundance or even overabundance by way of pictorial *copia* was also a viable means of exerting poetic license and engaging an audience keen to exercise judgment and/or revel in uncertainties.[135]

Pordenone's manipulation of pictorial *copia*, as a way of competitively engaging the art of Parma and Rome, could have resonated for his patrons as well as those members of the Piacentine citizenry familiar with the topics and techniques common to the art of rhetoric. Such familiarity would not have been constrained to university students: Robert Black's survey of Italian grammar syllabi demonstrates that by the fourteenth century, elementary rhetoric had become a standard component of secondary grammar textbooks. And while Pordenone was at work on his dome, instruction in the canons of rhetoric were being taught in Piacenza by the humanist Francesco Bernardino Cipelli, who had taken up the position of public lecturer on the art of rhetoric and the Greek language in 1527.[136] Cipelli, who had spent five years in Milan, maintained his position in Piacenza until his death in 1542 and published two instructional manuals in Latin: *Grammaticae Institutiones* (Venice, 1533) and *Compendium Institutionum grammaticarum* (Pavia, 1540).[137] Unfortunately, the historical record is nearly bereft of

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[135] In spite of the historical and ideological differences, I believe it is productive to suggest that, in some ways, the referential excesses of abundance invite the beholder of pictorial plenitude to exercise what John Keats called "negative capability." In a letter dated 21 December 1817, he employed the phrase to described what Samuel Taylor Coleridge lacked: "…and at once it struck me what quality went to form a Man of Achievement, especially in Literature, and which Shakespeare possessed so enormously – I mean *Negative Capability*, that is, when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason…" *The Poetical Works and Other Writings of John Keats*, ed. H. Buxton Forman, revised by Maurice Buxton Forman, intro. John Masefield, 8 vols. (New York: Phaeton Press, 1970), VI, pp. 103-104.

[136] On Cipelli see Ireneo Affò, *Memorie degli scrittori e letterati Parmigiani*, 6 vols. (Parma: Stamperia Reale, 1791), III, pp. 256-263; Leopoldo Cerri, *Memorie per la storia letteraria di Piacenzo in continuazione al Poggiali* (Piacenza: F. Solari, 1896), pp. 88-95; Marcus Deufert, "Die Lukrezemendationen des Francesco Bernardino Cipelli," *Hermes*, v. 126 (1998), pp. 370-379; Gian Mario Anselmi and Loredana Chines, "L'Umanesimo latino," in *Storia di Piacenza,* III, pp. 441-484, p. 464.

[137] Editions of these works may be found at the Biblioteca comunale Passerini Landi in Piacenza. As of yet, I have not been able to examine their contents.

reference to Cipelli and his position on the Ciceronian controversies, therefore one can only speculate as to whether Cipelli's time in Milan had exposed him to the diversity of available positions. One such position was voiced by Lancino Curzio. In his *Meditatio in Hebdomada Olivarum* (1508), Curzio describes his approach to Latin composition as follows:

> "I played at will [in my poetic works] with rhythm, song, epigrams, odes and also more extensive sylvae; read some of them which are more than 60000 poems in various meter, in which while I endeavor to imitate the ancients…I also attempt to coin new currency in Latin for them, even though perhaps what might be less capable from another person, might allure the reader with novelty, lay a trap for their good graces, and give pleasure."[138]

Curzio's compositions, and particularly his epigrammatic production, feature the relentless pursuit of metrical variation and unusual forms of linguistic contamination.[139] Such an approach was exceptional, but it constituted an important source for the dissemination of alternative possibilities in Latin composition within the Milanese ambit. More normative of Lombard humanist pursuits was Ludovico Ricchieri's *Antiquae*

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[138] "*Lusimus in quam arbitratu nostro rhythmos cantiones epigrammata cum odis sylvas etiam diffusiores quasdam supra sexaginta carminum milia varia numerorum lege, in quis veteres imitari dum conamur nova etiam ipsi […] latine tamen moneta excudere tentavimus si et forsan quae aliunde minus possent novitate lectorem allicerent gratiam aucuparentur et placerent,*" in Lancini Curtii, *Meditatio in Hebdomada Olivarum*, Milan, 1508, p. aii. For more on Lancino Curzio see Gian Mario Anselmi, Luisa Avellini and Ezio Raimondi, "Milano, Mantova e la Padania nel secolo XVI," in *Letteratura italiana: Storia e geografia*, 3 vols. (Turin: Giulio Einaudi, 1988), II, pp. 595-618, esp. p. 600; and Eduardo Melfi, "Curti (Corte, Corti, Curtius), Lancino" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, ed. Alberto Maria Ghisalberti, 79+ vols. (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1960+), v. 31(1985), pp. 487-488; and in Carlo Dionisotti, "Girolamo Claricio," *Studi sul Boccaccio*, v. 2 (1964), pp. 291-334, esp. pp. 315-319. For his experiments in the vernacular see Isella Dante, "Lo sperimentalismo dialettale di Lancino Curzio e compagni," in *In ricordo di Cesare Angelini: studi di letteratura e filologia*, eds. Franco Alessio and Angelo Stella (Milan: il Saggiatore, 1979), pp. 146-159.

[139] Curzio's epigrams were edited by his nephew Gaspare Della Chiesa and published in 1521. They consist of the *Syivarum libri decem*, *Epigrammaton libri decem*, and *Epigrammaton libri decem decados secundae*. See Melfi, Curti (Corte, Corti, Curtius), Lancino," pp. 487-488.

lectiones (1516).[140] This voluminous compilation of notes and topics by classical authors is an impressive example of the "storehouse" of *exempla* advocated in rhetorical manuals. The works of Ricchieri and Curzio suggest the breadth of Latin literary experimentation being conducted in Milanese humanist circles at this time and that, regardless of whether Cipelli preferred the Ciceronian or an eclectic model of imitation, Piacenza's public lecturer of rhetoric was probably aware of the arguments for and against each and contributed to their circulation in the course of his teaching. This is to say that the skills necessary to recognize in Pordenone's decorations a visual form of rhetorical amplification were not restricted to the Piacentine social elite and that for those beholders who could discern the diverse sources of the painter's adaptations, the value of their figurative richness could have also been appreciated.

It should be remembered that Pordenone's commission had been awarded during a time when the city was eager to reinforce the impression of political adherence to the Holy See. The desire to visualize that allegiance would have made the members of the *fabbriceria* particularly receptive to, if not insistent on, adoptions of the themes (e.g., religious syncretism), iconography (e.g., prophets and sibyls), pictorial devices (e.g., Raphael's illusionistic integration of center and margin), and formal language (e.g., heroically-conceived bodies of epic pathos) associated with Roman artistic achievement. In this regard, Pordenone's allusions, translations and deformations of the art of Rome clearly aligned with his patrons' political agenda. As we have seen, however, the

[140] For more on Ludovico Ricchieri (also known as Ludovicus Caelius Rhodiginus or Celio Rodigino) see Pedro Pablo Conde Parrado and José Luis Ruiz Miguel, "El Latín en las *Lectiones Antiquae* de Celio Rodigino," in *"Pectora mulcet": estudios de rétorica y oratoria latinas*, ed. Trinidad Arcos Pereira et al. (Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2009), pp. 765-775; Peter Bietenholz and Thomas Deutscher, eds., *Contemporaries of Erasmus: a Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation*, 3 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), III, p. 155; Dionisotti, "Girolamo Claricio," pp. 294-295.

reception of Roman artistic conceits in Pordenone's dome and the coetaneous engagement with the art of Correggio and his *équipe* also operate as a bid to proclaim the painter's creative inexhaustibility.

The implications that weigh upon Pordenone's exercise in pictorial abundance are not simply artistic and political. As argued above, the painter's method of composing elicits open-ended ways of thinking about the revelatory potential of human artifice and the non-transparency of sacred truth. Moreover, I would propose that the critical gain of such an exercise amounts to more than an attempt to glorify a miracle-working statue or publically magnify the impression of its sacredness with the marvel of sensational illusionism and overwhelming abundance.[141] At a time when reformers were levying attacks against miraculous images, Pordenone's decorations, like those of Parmagianino's at the shrine of the *Madonna della Steccata* in Parma, can be seen to register and bolster the agency of miraculous images. But there is a significant difference here. As Morten Steen Hansen has shown, Parmigianino's vault frescoes exploit the figurative status of Judaism as a means of distinguishing the orthodoxy of the *parmese* cult icon (figures 134, 208-210).[142] By pointing to the perverse attitudes of idolatrous Old Testament "others," Parmigianino's paintings defend the *Madonna della Steccata* as a discrete and privileged object whose status is unlike the decorations that glorify it. Conversely, Pordenone's paintings attempt to both amplify and participate in the miraculous potency of the *Madonna di Campagna*. Rather than offset the cult statue as a separate category, the

[141] Cf. David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 85.
[142] Morten Steen Hansen, "Parmigianino and the Defense of a Miraculous Image," in *The Miraculous Image in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, Papers from a conference held at the Accademia di Danimarca in collaboration with the Biblioteca Hertziana, Rome 31 May – 2 June 2003, ed. Erik Thunø and Gerhard Wolf (Rome: "L'erma" di Bretschneider, 2004), pp. 185-203, esp. 200-202.

interspatial relationship (figure 211) that Pordenone's paintings construct seems to be aimed at extending the holy image's semantic domain through overtly fictive means. It may have been due to such stupefying artifice that Marco Boschini felt compelled to claim that at Piacenza "*la Pitura supera el dasseno*" (painting exceeds the sense of reality) – a far stronger and more unusual compliment than the customary "art surpasses nature."[143] The cross-spatial dynamic between painted oracles and cult icon does not simply register the *Madonna*'s power but seeks to unbind the radical inherence of the prototype in the statue – to suggest the extension rather than containment of the agency that flows through it. But the relationship is much more ambiguous than that. The cupola decorations incorporate the cult statue into a massive ensemble that both delimits and calls into question their boundaries. Indeed, the criteria of a framing appear under duress, much like within the dome itself where the ornamented framework resists the status of exteriority. The cupola as a whole operates as the cult statue's *parergon*, for:

> "[it] comes against, beside, and in addition to the *ergon*, the work done [fait], the fact [le fait], but it does not fall to one side, it touches and cooperates within the operation, from a certain outside. Neither simple outside nor simply inside […] but whose transcendent exteriority come to play, abut onto, brush against, rub, press against the limit itself and intervene in the inside only to the extent that the inside is lacking."[144]

As a frame, the cupola decorations not only draw distinctions between inside/outside, interior/exterior, essential/inessential, but render them problematic: the aura of the cult

[143] Marco Boschini, *La carta navegar pittoresco*, ed. Anna Pallucchini (Orig. published Venice 1660; Venice: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1966), p. 115.
[144] Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, pp. 54-56.

object is both amplified and threatened by the cupola frescoes, which seek to intervene in the agency of the miracle-working image.

Augustine's Example

Notwithstanding, there is indication among Pordenone's decorations in the church that would seem to negate any claim to divine authenticity. As mentioned above, one of the first things visitors to the church would see upon entering was the frescoed altarpiece of *Saint Augustine Enthroned*, but the demonstrative nature of this image extends beyond the performance of a textual concordance and the kind of associative thinking that entails. On the codex beneath the saint's left hand is an inscription from the *City of God* (figure 212).[145] Past scholarship has pointed to this inscription to help explain the dome's extraordinary imagery. What has been repeatedly ignored, however, is that this inscription and its textual allusion deal directly with the dynamics and purpose of miraculous causation.

It should be stressed that during the early sixteenth century and especially after the publication of the first edition of his completed works by Johann Amerbach (1505-1506), Augustine's ideas became more ideologically charged than they ever had been. Providing an "intellectual arsenal" for both sides of the Lutheran controversy, Augustine's works offer a powerful example of a flexible intellectual authority, one that could be conscripted to serve the needs of diverse readers in different religious

[145] The most extensive treatment of the inscription was conducted by Biscontin, "Il fregio del Pordenone in Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza," pp. 64-69, although the importance of Augustine's *City of God* for Pordenone's dome frescoes has also been recognized by Arisi, *Santa Maria di Campagna a Piacenza*, pp. 164-16; Ceschi Lavagetto, "L'opera pittorica in Santa Maria di Campagna," p. 48; Furlan, *Il Pordenone* (1988), pp. 225-226, 263-266; and Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 293.

circumstances.[146] Within the context of a Marian shrine built to honor and uphold belief in a local miracle-working image, and one through whose alleged agency the pope had been recently saved, it is perhaps not insignificant that the painted text from the *City of God* was itself a response to the religious controversies that followed Alaric's sack of Rome in 410.[147]

The passage inscribed in Pordenone's fresco constitutes part of the first line of the fifteenth chapter in book ten:

"*Liber Decimus. Sic itaque divinae providentiae placuit ordinare*

Book X. Here, then is the way in which divine providence saw fit to arrange…"[148]

Taken at face value, the fragment could have functioned as a simple dictum granting textual authority to the form, content, and configuration of the adornments the beholder encountered within the church. As such, it offers little more than a platitude. However, its implications become much more interesting when the phrase is extended:

> "Here, then is the way in which divine providence saw fit to arrange the succession of temporal periods. It was arranged, as I have said and as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that the law should be laid down in the form of angelic pronouncements concerning the worship of the one true God."[149]

As the passage indicates, this chapter describes how the angels serve divine providence: as agents in the transmission of God's immutable truth to the sensible world of men. Hearing by inexpressible means "the language of eternity, which he [God] never starts to

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[146] Arnoud S. Q. Visser, *Reading Augustine in the Reformation: The Flexibility of Intellectual Authority in Europe, 1500-1620* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), esp. pp. 24-27, 30-31 (p. 115 for the quotation).

[147] For the details of Alaric's siege see Peter Heather, *Goths and Romans, 332-489* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 193-224.

[148] Augustine, *The City of God Against the Pagans*, III, bk. 10, ch. 15, pp. 316-317.

[149] *"Sic itaque divinae providentiae placuit ordinare temporum cursum ut, quem ad modum dixi et in actibus apostolorum legitur, lex in edictis angelorum daretur de unius veri Dei cultu…"* Ibid.

speak, nor ever ceases to speak," the angels deliver his law in a temporal succession.[150] The temporal components of the law, manifested in acts of sacrifice, incense burning, vows, dedications, etc. are defined as signs of eternal things, metaphors for spiritual devotion which enjoin the faithful, in tandem with the angels, to worship the one God.[151]

In this section of the treatise, which runs from chapter eight to chapter eighteen, true miracles are distinguished from magic, paranormal phenomena are shown to be part of God's unchangeable plan, and the rejection of scriptural evidence for miracles is proven unreasonable.[152] In light of this, one may deduce that for Augustine God's law and the promises it supports are delivered and guaranteed through divine interventions, which are mediated by the angels, recorded in the Scriptures, and performed according to divine providence.[153] In addition, chapter fifteen concludes with an important distinction: that none of God's creations can be identical to him ("…*qui non est quod ipse*").[154] This is because "he made them, they were created, and they need him by whom they were created in order to exist and be in good condition."[155]

For those beholders familiar with the content and context of the painted inscription, Pordenone's fresco of *Saint Augustine* could operate as an important reminder that nothing in the sensible world, not even the *Madonna di Campagna*, can

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[150] "*...non temporaliter sed...aeternaliter nec incipit loqui nec desinit...*" Ibid.

[151] "*Haec autem lex distributione temporum data est, quae prius haberet, ut dictum est, promissa terrena, quibus tamen significarentur aeterna, quae visibilibus sacramentis celebrarent multi, intellegerent pauci. Unius tamen Dei cultus apertissima illic et vocum et rerum omnium contestatione praecipitur, non unius de turba...* (Moreover, the delivery of the law took place at intervals of time, so that there came earlier as has been said, promises of earthly gifts. These were, however, symbols of eternal counterparts that in the shape of visible rites found many to participate as celebrants, though but few to penetrate the meaning. Nevertheless, the combined testimony of all the words and ceremonies presented in that law enjoins in the plainest terms the worship of one God, and not one of a throng of gods…)" Ibid., pp. 318-319.

[152] Augustine, *City of God*, pp. 280-337. Cf. Gerard O'Daly, *Augustine's City of God: A Reader's Guide* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), pp. 124-129.

[153] Cf. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, bk. 3, ch. 11, in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris: excudebat Migne, 1844-1903), v. 42, pp. 881-886.

[154] Augustine, *City of God*, bk. 10, ch. 15, pp. 318-319.

[155] "*Ille enim fecit, haec facta sunt, atque ut sint et bene se habeant eius indigent a quo facta sunt.*" Ibid.

claim equivalency with God, and that true miracles underpin the worship of God alone. Augustine's identification of angels as the mediators of divine intervention can also be said to moderate the position conceded to miraculous images by indirectly suggesting their auxiliary or gratuitous status in miraculous causation. For the Bishop of Hippo, miracles and the words and rituals that bear testimony to them all have the same aim (and I would include Pordenone's decorations here): that is, they are all proponents of the soul's liberation and the ascent from the temporal to the eternal, for it is through "visible miracles in heaven or on earth, whereby he [God] may quicken the soul, hitherto given up to visible things, to worship him, the invisible."[156] When considered collectively, the implications that resonate from the allusion to Augustine's treatise become an affirmation, inscribed on the surface of Pordenone's painting, of the intangible cause and ineffable means by which miracles occur.

When considered in relation to the dome frescoes and the assertions they make for the status of human artifice, the picture of *Saint Augustine* offers a negative feedback loop that implicitly undercuts their claim to participate in miraculous causation. As such, the relationship between the painting of *Saint Augustine*, the decorations of the cupola, and cult statue reflects a deep ambivalence about the communicative status of art. In responding to the recent innovations of his Roman and Emilian peers, Pordenone chose to depart from his prior experiments in dome painting by coupling the illusion of continuity between real and fictive space with an alternative means of generating marvel: the conceptual feast of pictorial *copia*. Within the space of the church, the dizzying array of painted figures, motifs, and materials that crowd the dome glorify the *Madonna di*

[156] "*…visibilia miracula in caelo vel terra*, *quibus ad se invisibilem colendum excitet animam adhuc visibilibus deditam*..." Ibid., bk. 10, ch. 12, pp. 308-309.

Campagna with a celebration of God's mosaic plenitude. As we have seen, the net of figurative associations generated by Pordenone's exercise in *copia* magnifies the expressive flexibility of its components, perpetuating deliberation over the relationship between visual signs and their referents. The ambiguity of form and inconsistency of relation that inheres within the visual order of the decorations emphasizes the importance of a mutable disposition in the pursuit of meaning, which is proclaimed to be neither transparent nor univocal but contingent and prolific. The awareness that these images register of the inherent duplicities of art is characteristic of the broader artistic investigations that were being conducted in Italy during the 1520s and 1530s, investigations in which the epistemological status of image-making was being reappraised. Much like his peers, the poetic license Pordenone applied to his treatment of form and composition underscores the tension between the expectations of mimesis and the assertion of painting as its own object. At Piacenza, the difference between Pordenone and his contemporaries is manifested in the particular means by which 1) a cross-spatial dynamic and 2) a visual rhetoric of abundance draw attention to the traffic between description, self-referentiality, and the potency of an image that is of a higher, miraculous order. Throughout Pordenone's dome, the accumulation and relation of diversely transposed artistic *exempla*, classical and biblical *topoi*, and referentially ambiguous motifs create tensions that resist resolution. The resultant opacity is a calculated effect and one intended to assert both the dissimulative nature of sacred truth and the artist's creative inexhaustibility. In contributing to a network of early modern Marian shrines Pordenone's cupola decorations complimented the *Madonna di Campagna* with the aesthetic appeal and theological purchase of *copia's* varied discourse.

CONCLUSION

A HISTORY OF DISPLACEMENT

Undoubtedly drawn by the offer of a major state commission, Pordenone returned to Venice sometime in July 1535 to begin work in the Palazzo Ducale. For the last few years of his life the artist remained more or less continuously in *La Serenissima*, where he achieved the highest level of patronage among the cultural elite. Indeed, his success at this time can be described as meteoric: having painted the ceiling and frieze of the Sala della Libreria (later known as the Sala dello Scrutinio), on 30 November 1537 the Council of Ten entrusted Pordenone with the completion of one or more large-scale paintings in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio.[1] His continued success in working for the senate is further attested at the basilica of San Marco, where Pordenone supplied designs for mosaics in the central well of the atrium (executed by the Zuccati brothers).[2] Equally important for Pordenone's rising celebrity was his execution of highly conspicuous private commissions, such as the façade of the Palazzo d'Anna[3] on the Grand Canal, and

[1] The directive is recorded in a letter from the Council of Ten to the Provveditori of the Magistrato al Sal, where Pordenone is given the opportunity to execute more than one painting ("*quelli altri lochi et quadri*") at the discretion of the Provveditori, a commission which would have presumably gone to Titian. See Gustav Ludwig, "Archivalische Beiträge zur Geschichte der venezianischen Kunst. Aus dem Nachlass Gustav Ludwig," in *Italienische Forschungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 4, eds. Wilhelm Bode, Georg Gronau, Detlev Hadeln (Berlin: Cassirer, 1911), p. 134.

[2] Marco Boschini, in *Le minere della pittura* (Venice: Nicolini, 1664), p. 2, was the first to attribute the mosaics' designs to Pordenone. Although there is some disagreement, these designs generally include lunette scenes of the *Crucifixion*, the *Entombment of Christ*, the *Raising of Lazarus*, and the *Entombment of the Virgin* with the accompanying prophets Shem, Noah, Amos, Joel, and two unidentified prophets. In the spandrels below, Pordenone is also attributed with designing the four Evangelists. See Fiocco, *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 94; Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, II, pp. 714-717.

[3] Beginning with Doni's *Disegno del Doni: partito in piv ragionamenti, ne qvali si tratta della scoltvra et pittvra*... (1549), pp. 51v–52r, the Palazzo d'Anna facade is mentioned in almost all of the subsequent art literature on Pordenone, from Vasari to Dolce to Lomazzo and so on. Given its deteriorated state, it is difficult to determine anything like a cohesive iconographic program for its imagery, but the lack of coherency appears to be rather typical of Venetian façade decorations at this time (cf. Vasari's remarks on

two other Venetian facades probably date from this time as well.[4] Pordenone's ascendency within such a rarified circle of elites[5] marked an end to his continuous migration and the start of an auspicious, if uneasy, inhabitancy built on and substantially sustained by his rivalry with Titian. With the addition of works executed at the churches of San Rocco, San Giovanni Elemosinario, and Santa Maria dell'Orto, as well as in the cloister at Santo Stefano and at the Scuola di San Francesco ai Frari, Pordenone's visibility within the city was such that his art could now offer a viable alternative to Titian and his cohort. Having already staked a claim for his artistic preeminence throughout the Po Valley, Pordenone's art of violent, hulking figures, daring foreshortening, and tumultuous figural compositions was poised to contend with the foremost painter of north Italy.

The interweaving of Pordenone's career with Titian's encompassed state, private, and corporate spheres of Venetian patronage and there are several indications that their works were to be exhibited side by side. The mosaic of Saint Mark that Titian designed for the basilica of San Marco, for example, is adjacent to the scenes designed by Pordenone. And a document from 22 November 1538 records a payment awarded to Pordenone by the Council of Ten to begin a painting between the sixth and seventh

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the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in *Le vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, IV, pp. 95-97.). The Palazzo d'Anna decorations consisted of a combination of allegorical figures, scenes from classical mythology and Roman history, and an *all'antica* decorative vocabulary similar to that found at Santa Maria di Campagna, Piacenza, and in the Pallavicino Chapel at the church of SS. Annunziata, Cortemaggiore.

[4] These include the façade of the Palazzo Morosini at S. Geremia on the Grand Canal, which included *Pallas Expelling the Vices*, and the cortile of the Palazzo Mocenigo Gambara near the Scuola Grande della Carità.

[5] At the state level this included Jacopo Soranzo, a procurator of San Marco, and probably Jacopo Sansovino, *protomaestro* to the procurators, all of whom operated under the aegis of Doge Andrea Gritti. At the private level, Pordenone enjoyed the support of Martino d'Anna as well as the Mocenigo and Navagerio families, among others. Cf. Maria Calì, "Patroni, committenti, amici del Pordenone fra religion e storia," pp. 93-101.

columns on the south wall of the Sala del Maggior Consiglio, i.e., besides Titian's famous *Battle*.[6] In the corporate sector, a deliberation of the Scuola della Carità held on 6 March 1538 granted Pordenone a commission to execute a scene from the life of the Virgin in their *albergo* directly next to Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple*.[7] The surviving evidence suggests that Pordenone was repeatedly pitted against Titian, lending credence to Vasari's claim that Pordenone "in competition always sought to put works where Titian had put his," and with no less at stake than the future of Venetian painting.[8] Unfortunately, the contest was over before it really began: Pordenone never completed the paintings for the Scuola della Carità and the Sala del Maggior Consiglio. Called to Ferrara by Duke Ercole II in late December 1538, the artist is recorded some three weeks later in the book of the dead at the church of San Francesco: "a painter from Pordenone was buried in S. Polo on the day 14 January 1539."[9] In the same year a letter from Jacopo Tibaldi to Duke Ercole reveals that the painter had died at "*l'hostaria da l'Angello,*" where his Excellency had allowed him to stay and work on "*cose de Prospectiva*."[10] Although Vasari notes that Pordenone was buried with honor, there is no

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[6] For the mosaics see Ettore Merkel, "Tiziano e i suoi mosaicisti a San Marco," in *Tiziano e Venezia: Convegno internazionale di studi* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1980), pp. 275-283. The document regarding Pordenone's payment was published by Giovanni Battista Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale di Venezia ovvero serie di atti publici dal 1253 al 1797* (Venice: Visentini, 1868), no. 471.

[7] Due to the artist's untimely death the painting was never executed, but a document of 6 March 1539 reports that Pordenone had persuaded the Scuola to alter its initial decision to have him paint the Assumption of the Virgin in favor of her marriage. The document also reveals that Pordenone had created a drawing of the subject ("*Pordenon designato tal cosa de carbon*"). See Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, II, p. 748.

[8] "*...cercava egli gareggiando sempre mettere opere dove Tiziano aveva messo le sue,"* in Vasari, *Le vite* (1550), ed. C. Ricci, IV, p. 239.

[9] "*Un depintore da Porto de non sepolto in S. Polo die 14 Januari 1539.*" See Giuseppe Campori, "Il Pordenone in Ferrara," *Atti e memorie delle RR. Deputazioni di storia patria per le provincie modenesi e parmensi*, v. 3 (1865), pp. 271-280 (p. 279).

[10] Ibid., p. 280.

record of a funeral celebration or memorial of any kind.[11] To be sure, the artist's unexpected death appeared strange, and even gave rise to rumors that he had been poisoned, but stranger still, as Cohen has noted, is the painter's unexceptional posthumous fame.[12]

For an artist who had enjoyed the support of an exclusive circle of Venetian elites and whose works were of tremendous importance for succeeding generations of artists across northern Italy, the lukewarm reception and marginalization of the artist in mid- to late-sixteenth century art-theoretical and historical literature demands scrutiny. Modern scholars typically explain the lack of attention as the result of the many lost or destroyed works by the painter, particularly the lost facades he frescoed in Venice and Udine. But this explanation does not account for the artist's lack of recognition by Lombard writers or the polemics that shaped *Cinquecento* art literature.

The sudden disappearance of the artist and the absence of a catafalque or distinguished memorial can be seen as emblematic of the artist's later reception in sixteenth-century art literature. The artist's migratory form of identity practice preempted his marginalization and devaluation in the literature produced after his death. Unanchored to a single town or region, the artist was, as a consequence, without the sustained advocacy of those stakeholders who were most invested in defining regional difference. This is very different from the way Pordenone was celebrated by writers during his own lifetime. However, the artist's death transpired at a particularly loaded moment in Italy's

[11] If there ever was a tomb, it was destroyed by an earthquake that hit S. Polo in 1570. The church was rebuilt on the designs of Alberto Schiatti, the first stone being laid on 18 October 1575. See Carlo Brisighella, *Descrizione delle pitture e sculture della città di Ferrara*, ed. Maria Angela Novella (Ferrara: Spazio libri editori, 1991), p. 194.
[12] Cohen, *The Drawings of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, p. 4.

history when – well before the pursuit of national identity – inhabitants of the Italian peninsula were preoccupied with establishing regional distinctiveness. With the publication of Vasari's *Lives* in 1550, the production of art theory and criticism in Italy increased dramatically. As Campbell has noted, writers from places that had never appeared on the map of Italy's artistic geography were suddenly insisting on their own artistic ancestry and traditions.[13] In the works by these writers, Pordenone's reception was undoubtedly colored by local chauvinism and he is fitted into different camps and given different roles depending on the writer's geographical perspective. The roles that Pordenone plays in this literature are the result of several factors, but all are fundamentally tied to the search for security in regional identity formation. Vincenzo Borghini's indices of artists according to regional origin and occupation, Vasari's teleological scheme, even the cosmological system that governs Lomazzo's *Idea del Tempio* – despite their ostensible objectives, each of these writers is also attempting to make sense of artistic identity in ways that rely on stabilizing a relationship between style and place.[14]

Painters like Pordenone, whose artistic persona was conspicuously multiple and fluid and whose works do not embody a strong sense of emplacement or adhere to a single set of artistic values, could present a serious problem for this search. Moreover, writers preoccupied with extolling localized artistic practices were not obligated by bonds of territorial allegiance to celebrate Pordenone. Thus, for such authors Pordenone most often functioned as a foil to privilege local talent.

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[13] Campbell, "Artistic Geographies," p. 33.
[14] For more on the lists Borghini compiled for Vasari's 1568 edition of the *Lives*, see Kim, *The Traveling Artist in the Italian Renaissance*, pp. 81-83.

As the foregoing chapters have demonstrated, Pordenone clearly understood the need to polemically position himself in relation to his peers, but the ways in which he did so are far more complicated than what *Cinquecento* art literature reveals. We should remember that in early sixteenth century Italy, the critical terminology of art was far from stable and familiar critical premises were often transformed, subverted, or simply transcended in practice. Descriptions of Pordenone's art are cursory and rely on superficial formal characteristics, which have led some modern scholars to view the painter as an uncritical purveyor of Central Italian taste in northern Italy.[15] Pordenone, as I have sought to underline throughout this dissertation, should be evaluated on his own terms and not as the derivative of another artist. The strategies by which he distinguished himself cannot be reduced to an obsequious Michelangelism. In each locale he visited, the artist sought to define himself as a creative alternative, one that advocated a form of contaminate artifice distinguished by the adversarial character and geographical awareness of its performance. To confine the interpretation of Pordenone's art to the scant remarks of his contemporaries is to nullify the mediation of the viewer's historical distance. As Rebecca Zorach has rightly insisted, "Historical inquiry builds a narrative that is necessarily produced from the categories of its own time, as they confront categories of a past time."[16]

After Pordenone settled in Venice, local writers of art struggled to characterize his paintings within the confines of convention. These writers do not provide the key to

[15] As Furlan has noted, the characterization of Pordenone as "*primo dei romanisti veneti*" is derived essentially from the studies by Fiocco, *Giovanni Antonio Pordenone,* and Schwarzweller, *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*; which she repeats in Caterina Furlan, "Aspetti del disegno in Tiziano e Pordenone," in *Tiziano e Venezia. Convegno internazionale di studi* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1980), pp. 425-431 (pp. 429-430); and Idem, "Pordenone, Raffaello e Roma: un rapporto rivisitato (1515-1522)," pp. 85-112.
[16] Zorach, *Blood, Milk, Ink, Gold: Abundance and Excess in the French Renaissance*, pp. 20-21.

understanding the artist's practice, but represent attempts to align certain characteristics of Pordenone's art with a critical vocabulary that by the middle of the century was already informed by regional ideology. By way of close reading I have attempted to reevaluate Pordenone's creative enterprise and the result is a very different picture from the one painted by the artist's early literary reception. My concern has been with understanding how Pordenone's migratory practice informed the various strategies he developed to differentiate himself from his peers and distinguish his own authoritative voice. Up until this point I have not been interested in determining what sustained or diminished the artist's fame, but the role that migration played in Pordenone's posthumous reputation is an important one and can help us to understand why this painter, who during his own lifetime represented a powerful alternative for the development of north Italian art, has been relegated to the margins of art history.

The controversies of mid-century art literature are recited so often in modern scholarship that one can easily overlook more subtly articulated lines of inquiry. While many of the treatises discussed below are rightly read as centering on the polemical evaluation of Italy's leading artistic styles, an attentive reading of key portions of these texts will reveal that Pordenone's status as a migratory painter is central to the position he occupies in them.

It has been argued that Pordenone's popularity in Venice during the 1530s depended on a shift in taste prompted by Doge Andrea Gritti and his cohort, the Grimani family, and several others who favored Central Italian artistic values.[17] This view is

[17] Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, pp. 410, 412, 415-418. For the Venetian fascination with Central Italian art more generally, see Michel Hochmann, *Venise et Rome 1500-1600: deux écoles de peinture et leurs échanges* (Geneva: Droz, 2004).

supported by the critical acclaim Pordenone enjoyed during his own lifetime, which also demonstrates that he was recognized among the *literati* as a protagonist in the Venetian art scene as early as 1535 and possibly earlier.[18] One of the most important early indications of Pordenone's renown comes from an unlikely source: the libelous prose writer and Titian partisan, Pietro Aretino. In Act 3, Scene 7 of the February 1536 edition of his *La Cortigiana*, which is a comedy targeting the corruption of the papal court before the Sack of Rome, Pordenone is praised alongside Titian but for different qualities:

> "In Venice there is the glorious, marvelous and great Titian, whose coloring breathes like flesh that pulsates with life…Here is Pordenone, whose work makes one doubt whether nature gives relief to art or art to nature."[19]

Whereas Titian is admired for his coloristic vitality, Pordenone is praised for his *rilievo* or effects of projection and plasticity. As Cohen has observed, Aretino's appraisal of Pordenone may have been influenced by the painter's treatment of the Palazzo d'Anna façade, which included the radically projective figure of Marcus Curtius astride his horse

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[18] The first reliably dated reference occurs in the introduction to Lodovico Dolce's August 1535 edition of *La poetica d'Horatio*. Here Pordenone, along with Titian and Bernardino Licinio, are noted among those artists who are closest to Michelangelo: "…*il che sarà quasi ritratto non di mano di Michele Agnolo; che per gran miracolo di natura la dignità della pittura e della scultura, già per tanti secoli quasi oscura e spenta, ha tolto dalle tenebre col darle vita nell'antica sua bellezza; o di quelli che piú a lui s'avvicinano il gentilissimo Titiano, Antonio da Pordenone; o 'l mio Bernardin Licinio: ma come d'uno di coloro che tolgono gli esempi da questi per avezzarsi a dipingere; i quali ritratti, quantunque veramente e della maniera del colorire e della bontà del disegno sieno men buoni del primo, onde essi son tolti, pure nondimeno l'invenzione e l'arte rappresentano del maestro*," in Lodovico Dolce, *La poetica d'Horatio tradotto per Messer Lodovico Dolce* (Venice: Francesco Bindoni and Mapheo Pasini, August 1535), p. A4r; reproduced in Furlan, "Il Pordenone e Lodovico Dolce," *Il Noncello*, v. 45 (1977), pp. 119-128 (p. 124). Although the dating is questionable, earlier(?) praise of Pordenone in the Venetian ambit appears in Giulio Camillo (Delminio), *Pro suo de eloquentia theatro ad Gallos oratio*, cited by Fabio Di Maniago, *Storia delle belle arti friulane*, 2nd ed. (Udine: Fratelli Mattiuzzi, 1823), pp. 88, 343.

[19] "[*A Venezia*] *ci è il glorioso, mirabile e gran Tiziano, il colorito del quale respire non altrimenti che le carne che hanno il polso e la lena* […] *Ecco il Pordenone, le cui opere fan dubitare se la natura dà il rilievo all'arte o l'arte a la natura*." Pietro Aretino, *La Cortigiana* (Venice, 1536); reproduced in Furlan, "Il Pordenone e Lodovico Dolce," p. 121.

and leaping into the Grand Canal (figure 213).[20] Aretino's praise is significant because in applauding the virtues of Venetian culture Pordenone is the only artist placed alongside Titian. Moreover, his remark about the artist's skill in creating effects of *rilievo* will be taken up in subsequent literature and often aligned with other qualities more specifically associated with Central Italian art. Further recognition of Pordenone's eminence among Venetian painters occurs in the introduction to the June 1536 edition of Lodovico Dolce's *Il primo libro di Sacripante*, where praise of Pordenone is made in explicit comparison to Michelangelo:

> "Similarly no artificer or painter has known how to explain that greatness and divinity in *disegno*, that in our day is properly and only given to Michelangelo, and a few or almost none appears in Italy to know how to find painters so marvelous as the gentle messer Pordenone. None the less the more others approach these two, the more they are praised and valued."[21]

It must be stressed that in the mid-1530s, i.e., before the emergence of a formalized critical theory of art in Venice, Dolce's position was quite different and far less polemical than that voiced in his *Dialogo della Pittura*, entitled *L'Aretino* (1557). It is clear that at this time, Dolce held Michelangelo to be the leading artist of Italy, an opinion which he had already articulated in his August 1535 edition of *La poetica d'Horatio*.[22] Dolce's

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[20] Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, p. 417.

[21] "*Ma veggiamo medesimamente che fin quì nissuno artefice o dipintore ha saputo spiegar quella grandezza & divinità nel disegno, che ai nostri tempi è propria & solo dono di Michele Agnolo, & pochi o quasi niun pare in Italia sanno trovare i pittori al tanto mirabile quanto gentile M. Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone. Nondimeno quelli che più si accostano a questi duo, sono anche più de gli altri lodati e tenuti in prezzo*." Lodovico Dolce, *Dieci canti di Sacripante di M. Lodovico Dolce quali seguitano Orlando Furioso novamente ristampati, historiati & con ogni diligentia corretti*, s. l., 1537, f. 2v; reproduced in Hochmann, *Venise et Rome 1500-1600*, p. 45 n. 7; translated in Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, 417.

[22] See note 18 above.

association of Pordenone with the Florentine and the importance he places on *disegno* is illuminated by the woodcut Pordenone designed for the frontispiece of Dolce's *Sacripante* (figure 214), for which a red chalk study survives at the Biblioteca Ambrosiana. In generic terms, the drawing of *Sacripante Defeated by Love* (figure 215) exhibits the coherent rendering of volume, plastic dynamism and difficult foreshortening that Dolce's Venetian audience might have associated with art imported from Central Italy, such as Raphael's cartoon of the *Conversion of Saint Paul* (figure 216) in the Grimani collection. Dolce's emphatic commendation of Pordenone has been dismissed as "youthful intemperance" or as a concession intended to indulge the Tusco-Roman taste of those to whom he dedicated the *canti di Sacripante*: Andrea Gritti, Pietro Giustiniani, and Pietro Zeno.[23] Notwithstanding, the affinity Dolce recognized between Pordenone and Michelangelo was of crucial significance for the former's posthumous literary reputation in Venice.

In the 1540s Pordenone continued to rank among Italy's leading artists, appearing with Titian and Bonifacio de' Pitati in Giovanni Maria Memmo's *L'Oratore* (1545) and in the transregional list of valiant painters given in Paolo Pino's *Dialogo di pittura* (1548).[24] Beyond commending Pordenone as a painter of varied talents and erudition, Pino reveals very little about the artist, but his treatise is crucial for instituting the terms by which later critics would describe Pordenone's art and for the hierarchy of artistic

[23] Furlan, "Il Pordenone e Lodovico Dolce," p. 124.

[24] Giovanni Maria Memmo, *L'Oratore del magnifico dottere e cavaliere M. Giovanmaria Memo* (Venice: Giouanni de farri & fratelli, 1545), bk. III, p. 89r: "*...che è il buon dissegno.nellequai arti, si come nella scultura, appresso gli antichi, eccellenti, & di gran pregio furono Policleto & Lisippo: cosi à tempi nostri, Michelagnolo, Iacopo Sansovino, & altri:nell'altra Zeusi, & Apelle, & hoggi di Titiano, il Pordonone, & Bonifacio Veronese. I quali tutti, benche nell'arte loro hano in somma eccelléza, si che nó vi si possa aggiugnere niente di meno in una medesima arte ciascun di loro, tiene stile, & modo diverso l'uno dall'altro*"; and Pino, *Dialogo di pittura*, ed. Barocchi, I, p. 126.

values it espouses. As mentioned above, much of Pordenone's posthumous reputation has to do with the geographical bias that underlies the polemics of mid-century art literature. By the 1550s, the debate over the relative merits of *disegno* and *colore*, as they were embodied in the styles of Michelangelo, Raphael, and Titian, had set at odds the art of Central Italy and Venice. It was Pino's 1548 treatise, however, that established the conditions according to which these competing values would be contrasted.[25]

As a formal theoretical publication, Pino's *Dialogo* attempts to rewrite Alberti's *De pictura* but without the protracted mathematical expositions.[26] Towards the middle of the treatise Pino proposes a tripartite definition of painting, dividing it into *invenzione*, *disegno*, and *colore*. Of these three categories, *colore* is granted distinct critical importance, but the majority of theoretical attention is accorded to *disegno*. Comprised of judgment, circumscription, practice, and right composition (*retta composizione*), *disegno* is what makes painting the "guide and lodestone of all the arts."[27] In describing each of its four parts, Pino privileges composition as that which includes all the others parts for it comprises the complete formation of surfaces.[28] He also affirms that the most skilled expression of composition, and by extension all the parts of *disegno*, lies in the effects of relief and especially in foreshortening, the "*parte più nobile nell'arte nostra*" (most noble

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[25] Cf. Mary Pardo, *Paolo Pino's* Dialogo della pittura: *a Translation with Commentary*, PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1984, pp. 65ff. Michel Hochmann has shown that the distinction between Michelangelo's *disegno* and Titian's *colore* first occurred in a letter by Aretino to Paolo Manuzio from 11 July 1542: "*Certo che, chi vede le cose sue, conosce disegna Michelagnolo e come colorisce Tiziano*," in *Venise et Rome, 1500-1600*, pp. 47 n. 17.

[26] See Mary Pardo, *Paolo Pino's* Dialogo della pittura, pp. 44, 46, 112-284.

[27] *Certo è che la pittura impera e supera di virtù tutte l'arti, come guida e calamita di esse, per l'ordine e per la perfezzione del disegno*..." Pino, *Dialogo della pittura*, ed. Barocchi, I, p. 109.

[28] "*L'ultima poi è detta composizione: in questa s'include tutte l'altre, cioè il giudicio, la circoscrizzione e la practica, imperò che questa retta composizione consiste nel formar integramente le superfizie*..." Pino, *Dialogo della pittura*, ed. Barocchi, I, p. 114.

part of our art).[29] As Mary Pardo has demonstrated, the foreshortened figure is also central to Pino's discussion of perspective and appears throughout the treatise as one of the supreme difficulties of art.[30] The effects of relief and foreshortening are the two qualities with which Pordenone's art will be most consistently identified with in all subsequent sixteenth-century literature regardless of regional affiliation.[31] As constituents of *disegno*, these qualities were evidently associated with the art of Central Italy and, given their prominence in Pino's *Dialogo*, can be considered among those artistic values most appreciated by Venetians attracted to Tuscan art. Such qualities help account for what the literate public admired about Pordenone's paintings. In fact, in the year following Pino's publication, Pordenone's most daring public experiment in foreshortening, the façade of the Palazzo d'Anna, was singled out as one of the five artistic marvels of Venice by Anton Francesco Doni in his *Disegno partito in più ragionamenti* (Venice, 1549).[32]

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[29] "*Questa [composition] dà la giusta porzione al tutto [...] constrafà ben gli scurci, parte più nobile nell'arte nostra, figne ben li drappi senza confusione di pieghe, sempre accenando il nudo sotto dà gran rilievo al tutto: e quest'è lo spirito della pittura*," in Pino, *Dialogo della pittura*, ed. Barocchi, I, p. 114.

[30] Pardo, *Paolo Pino's* Dialogo della pittura, pp. 179-180, 184-185, 242, 512 n. 233.

[31] The artist's skill in relief and/or foreshortening is praised by Vasari, *Le vite* (1550), ed. C. Ricci, IV, pp. 238-239; Lodovico Dolce in Mark W. Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino" and Venetian Art Theory of the Cinquecento* (New York: College Art Association and New York University Press, 1968), p. 182; Francesco Sansovino, *Dialogo di tutte le cose notabili che sono in Venetia* (Venice, 1561), p. 17v; Idem, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare descritta in XIII libri* (Venice: 1581), bk. VIII, p. 124v; Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, *Libro dei sogni* (1563), in *Scritti sulle arti*, ed. Roberto Paolo Ciardi, 2 vols. (Florence: Marchi & Bertolli, 1973), I, p. 112; Idem, *Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scoltura et architettura*, II, p. 260; Armenini, *De' veri precetti della pittura*, pp. 155 & 205; Girolamo Bardi, *Dichiaratione di tutte le istorie, che si contengono nei quadri posti novamente delle Sale dello Scrutinio, e del Gran Consiglio, del Palagio Ducale della Serenissima Republica di Vinegia* (Venice: F. Valgrisio, 1587), n.p.

[32] The reference occurs in a letter included in the treatise and addressed to Simon Carnesecchi: "*...a Vinegia Quattro cavalli divini, le cose di Giorgione da Castel Franco Pittore, la storia di Titiano (huomo eccellentissimo) in palazzo* [presumably the lost Battle fresco], *la facciata della casa dipinta dal Prodonone sopra il Canal grande* [Palazzo d'Anna], *una tavola d'altare d'Alberto Duro in San Bartolomeo; in particolare v'è lo studio del Bembo & di M. Gabriel Vendramino Gentilhuomo Venetiano al quale io son servidore con molti altri & infinite antichità poi miracolose come è l'Apollo di Monsignor de Martini, che vi saranno mostrate*." Doni, *Disegno del Doni: partito in piv ragionamenti,* pp. 51v-52r.

Among Venetian writers, the most significant indication of an adverse shift in attitude toward Pordenone's art and the qualities associated with it occurs in Dolce's *L'Aretino* (1557). As the first Venetian response to Vasari's *Lives*, Dolce's treatise presents a calculated rebuttal to the Aretine's adulation of Michelangelo and to the acclaim Central Italian art enjoyed in Venice. However, certain passages of the text also reveal that Pordenone's status as a migratory painter is crucial to the place he occupies in Dolce's schema of Italian art.

Opposition to Michelangelo has already been heralded in Venice by Pietro Aretino when, in a 1545 letter to the artist (published 1547), he attacked the Sistine *Last Judgment* for its lack of propriety.[33] It comes as no surprise then that knowing how to exercise propriety ("*nel sapergli maneggiare convenevolmente*") is one of the principal virtues achieved by Titian in Dolce's treatise.[34] Much more than a bid for Titian's preeminence in the handling of color, *L'Aretino* presents a systematic discussion of painting in which the styles and talents of Michelangelo and Raphael are contrasted to the advantage of the latter and in terms that were equally applicable to Titian.[35] Like Pino, Dolce divided painting into *invenzione*, *disegno* and *colorito*, and maintained the predominance of *disegno* as the governing principle of art. Therefore, in order to raise Titian to an equal or superior position to Michelangelo, Dolce first needed to discredit the Florentine's supremacy in *disegno*, which he did by bringing in Raphael and by insisting

[33] Sent to Michelangelo in November 1545, Aretino then readdressed the letter to Alessandro Corvino with the date 1547. The letter is reproduced in Giovanni Gaye, *Carteggio inedito d'artisti dei secoli XIV, XV, XVI*, 3 vols. (Florence: Giuseppe Molini, 1839-1840), II, pp. 332-335.
[34] Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino" and Venetian Art Theory of the Cinquecento*, pp. 154 & 156.
[35] See the very important essay on the role of *disegno* in Dolce's treatise by Maurice Poirier, "'Disegno' in Titian: Dolce's Critical Challenge to Michelangelo," in *Tiziano e Venezia*. Convegno internazionale di studi, Venezia, 1976 (Verona: Neri Pozza, 1980), pp. 249-253.

on the importance of *facilità* over *difficultà*.[36] For Dolce, Michelangelo was unmatched in only one respect: the execution of muscular nudes in difficult foreshortenings. Alternatively, Raphael was praised for the quality of ease, which granted him "greater excellence" in *disegno*, for "he was more varied and universal and better observed the proprieties of the sexes and of age, and…because more charm and greater pleasure is to be found in his paintings."[37] Having pigeonholed Michelangelo, Dolce then considers the virtues of prominent artists working throughout Italy before turning to Titian where "one sees gathered together to perfection all of the excellent features which have individually been present in many cases."[38]

Pordenone's position within the dialogue is a critical one. Placed at the end of Dolce's account of Italy's exemplary painters, Pordenone operates as the pivot on which the discourse turns definitively to Titian. No longer celebrated as the only artist in Italy who measures up with Michelangelo, Pordenone is now judged by Dolce to be distinctly less than his Venetian rival and with the suggestion that his prowess was dependent on him: "And his [Pordenone's] level needed to be not the least bit lower than this, since he had our Titian to compete with and always remained at a far remove from him."[39] Dolce is also careful to displace responsibility for the admiration conceded to Pordenone, for it is not the interlocutor Aretino, but anonymous "painters" who "have always looked [on

[36] Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino" and Venetian Art Theory of the Cinquecento,* pp. 90 & 176.
[37] "*nel disegno...dalla parte di Rafaello maggiore eccellenza, essendo stato egli piu vario e piu universale, & havendo serbato meglio la proprietà de i sessi e de glianni; e trovandosi nelle sue Pitture piu gratia e maggior diletto..."* Ibid., p. 178, English translation on p. 179.
[38] *...in costui...si veggono raccolte a perfettione tutte le parti eccellenti, che si sono trovate divise in molti: essendo, che d'inventione, ne di disegno niuno lo superò giamai*." Ibid., p. 184, English translation on p. 185.
[39] Ibid.

him] with great esteem."[40] The artist is now little more than a foil for accentuating Titian's dominion over painting: having upbraided Pordenone, Dolce felt sufficiently justified to claim: "Both in terms of invention and in terms of draftsmanship, that is, no one ever surpassed him [Titian]. And again, as regards coloring, there was never anyone who reached his level."[41]

Also significant in this context are the passing references made to Titian's *Death of Saint Peter Martyr* (1530) at the start and end of the dialogue, as they allude to the competition in which Titian eclipsed Pordenone and Palma Vecchio. Of course, by 1557 recognition of Titian's superiority over Pordenone was relatively commonplace: in the 1550 *Vita di Pordenone*, Vasari had already stressed their rivalry and Pordenone's failure to surpass the Venetian.[42] What is of interest here is that Dolce's trite characterization of Pordenone as a master "fond of foreshortenings and fearsome figures (*dilettossi di scorti e di figure terribili*)" suggests that, like Michelangelo, Pordenone falls short of Titian because he pursued his art "in one element alone," i.e., the *difficultà* of complex foreshortening.[43] It is all the more telling, therefore, that Dolce decries this particular practice, so closely tied to the art of Central Italy. Having established that "Painting was invented primarily in order to give pleasure," Dolce insists that "Because few people understand foreshortening, few derive pleasure from them; and even with connoisseurs they prove at times more annoying than pleasing."[44]

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[40] Ibid., p. 183.
[41] Ibid., p. 185.
[42] "*non poté mai Giovanni Antonio superare la dilicatezza e la bontà che nell'opere di Tiziano si vede*." Vasari, *Le vite* (1550), ed. C. Ricci, IV, p. 237.
[43] Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino" and Venetian Art Theory of the Cinquecento,* pp. 149 & 182, 183.
[44] Ibid., p. 149.

In casting aspersions on the most conspicuous quality connecting Pordenone and Michelangelo, Dolce's criticism speaks to an issue much larger than Pordenone's reputation or a shift in Venetian taste. Rather, it foregrounds an antagonism that, despite the author's own disclaimer against local chauvinism,[45] was motivated by regional bias. In order to champion the artistic culture of Venice over Central Italy, Pordenone's art must be relegated to an inferior position. This does not mean that Pordenone was ostracized: Dolce continued to include the painter among the notable artists listed in his *Vita di Carlo Quinto* (1561) and in his *Dialogo dei colori* (1565), but he is never granted individual recognition.[46] Following the publication of *L'Aretino*, Pordenone received only sporadic mention by Venetian writers such as Francesco Sansovino and Girolamo Bardi, but always perfunctorily and in terms that rehearse Dolce's narrow characterization.[47] It would not be until the mid-seventeenth century, with the publication of Carlo Ridolfi's *Le maraviglie dell'arte* (1648) and Marco Boschini's *Le minere della pittura veneziana* (1664), that Pordenone paintings enjoyed renewed and extended praise in the service of Venetian patriotism. By that point, however, the painter had become little more than an afterthought in histories dedicated to the greatness of Venetian art under the banner of Titian.

One of the most curious aspects of the art literature produced by Lombard writers in the sixteenth century is the near absence of any discussion of Pordenone, a conspicuous omission considering the attention his works in Cremona and Piacenza

[45] The interlocutor Aretino repeatedly rebuffs Fabrini for allowing affections for his patria to cloud his judgment. Cf. Ibid., pp. 87 & 170.
[46] Dolce, *Dialogo dei colori*, p. 116; Idem, *Vita dell'invittis e gloriosiss imperador Carlo Quinto* (Venice: G.G. De' Ferrari, 1651; reprint [Spain]: Hidalguia, 2000), n.p., in the section entitled "Huomini illustri nella architettura, nella pittura, e nella scoltura.
[47] See note 31 above.

received from non-Lombard critics and the tremendous impact he made on the following generation of north Italian painters.[48] As mentioned in the second chapter, Francesco Somenzi and Cristoforo Magnani indigenized Pordenone's projective illusionism into Cremonese artistic culture. And the works variously executed by Giulio, Antonio, and Vincenzo Campi at San Sisto in Piacenza, at the parrocchiale in Pizzighettone, and at San Sigismondo, Sant'Agata and the Cathedral in Cremona all respond to the legacy of Pordenone's daring foreshortening and hulking bodies of dynamic plasticity. Bernardino Gatti's affinity with Pordenone was such that on two occasions he was selected to complete the latter's unfinished projects. And the organ shutters painted by the Cremasco Giovanni da Monte at S. Nazaro in Milan offer a powerful rejoinder to Pordenone's shutters of the same subjects at the Duomo of Spilimbergo.

The absence or sidelining of Pordenone in Lombard art literature should be seen in reactionary terms. Much like the Venetian critics, Lombards writing in the wake of Vasari's promotion of Tuscan-Roman supremacy felt the need to denounce his prejudice as they extolled the virtues of local talents. In his *Discorso intorno alla scoltura e pittura* (1584), for example, the Cremonese writer Alessandro Lamo took the Aretine to task for his dismissive assessment of the local painter Camillo Boccaccino, claiming that Vasari had done "great injustice" (*tanto torto*) to Camillo's virtue and quite mockingly inveighed: "Ah Vasari, so small and insignificant do the works of Camillo seem to

[48] Two notable examples include Pordenone's exclusion from Antonio Campi, *Cremona fedelissima citta et nobilissima colonia de Romani rappresentata in disegno col suo contado* (Cremona: Troma & Bartoli, 1585); and Gregorio Comanini, *Il Figino overo del fine della pittura* (1591), in *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento: fra manierismo e contrariforma*, ed. P. Barocchi, 3 vols. (Bari: Laterza, 1960-1962), III, pp. 237-379. A few important non-regional writers that discuss Pordenone's works in Lombardy are Vasari, *Le vite* (1550), ed. C. Ricci, IV, pp. 237-240; Idem, *Le vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, IV, pp. 113-114, 117-118; and Armenini, *De' veri precetti della pittura*, p. 155. Even Marcantonio Michiel notes his frescoes in Cremona Cathedral and in the rectory of the Convento di Sant'Agostino, in *Notizia d'opera del disegno* (1543), pp. 84 & 88.

you?"[49] Lamo's treatise is representative of a phenomenon Campbell has described as a kind of "fetishizing of the local" or "intransigent provincialism" often manifest in the polemics of mid-century writers working outside of Florence, Rome, and Venice.[50] Preoccupied with regional difference and the celebration of what they claimed were indigenous artistic traditions, writers such as Lamo emphasized the excellence and independence of local artists, but in doing so they disassociated their locales from larger networks of cultural flow and the prestige attached to them. In Lamo's *Discorso*, Pordenone is mentioned only in passing and none of his works are described. Of those few passages, the most significant is a parenthetical acknowledgement that Vasari thought Camillo imitated Pordenone.[51] This is very significant, for in the 1568 edition of the *Lives* Vasari claimed that it was Pordenone who first brought "*il buon modo di dipingere*" to Cremona.[52] Lamo evidently disagreed. For the Lombard author, Pordenone was just one of many artists who contributed to the decoration of the cathedral and who Bernardino Campi (the treatise's protagonist) saw during his travels through Lombardy and Emilia.[53] Reading Vasari's advocacy of Pordenone as a threat to local artistic heritage, Lamo minimized the painter's importance (and thus his legacy) in order to amplify the reputation of local talent. In this way, Lamo curtailed the potential role that an imported artistic model could play as evidence of Cremona's artistic ascendency. Pordenone is marginalized so that the accomplishments of a "foreign" painter would not detract from the promotion of local achievement.

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[49] "*Ah Vasari picciole, e di puoca importanza ti sembrarono l'opere di Camillo?*" in Alessandro Lamo, *Discorso di Alessandro Lamo intorno alla scoltura e pittura*, pp. 33 & 34.
[50] Campbell, "Artistic Geographies," p. 33.
[51] Lamo, *Discorso di Alessandro Lamo intorno alla scoltura e pittura*, p. 33.
[52] Vasari, *Le vite* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, VI, p. 493.
[53] Lamo, *Discorso intorno alla scoltura e pittura*, pp. 55 & 84.

An important exception to this kind of provincializing literary output is the writings of the Milanese painter and theorist, Gian Paolo Lomazzo. In addressing the purpose of art and its centrality within the world order, the two texts Lomazzo published at the end of the century provide a pluralist corrective to the *campanilismo* of Vasari and the separatist attitudes of the author's Lombard peers. Taken together, Lomazzo's encyclopedic *Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scoltura et architettura* (1584) and *Idea del Tempio della Pittura* (1590) articulate a single theoretical system as well as a sophisticated explanatory model for the causes and effects of individual styles.[54] This model is most succinctly formulated in the *Idea del Tempio*, where Lomazzo appeals to astrological determinism in union with elemental and humoral theories of temperament to justify the diversity of artistic styles. "All excellent in themselves" (*come che tutte eccellenti in se stesse*), these styles are embodied by the "governors" of the author's Temple of Painting: Michelangelo, Gaudenzio Ferrari, Polidoro da Caravaggio, Leonardo, Raphael, Mantegna, and Titian.[55] Lomazzo's achievement lies not only in developing a theoretical system to legitimate an eclectic canon of art, but also in the persuasive application of that system to the material products of individual artists.

Despite the inclusive nature and trans-regional scope of Lomazzo's literary efforts, Pordenone's art plays no more than a subservient role in the aforementioned texts. In the *Trattato*, he is admired, albeit predictably, for his skill in foreshortening, particularly with regards to the movement of horses (at the Palazzo d'Anna in Venice) and in cases of extreme *di sotto in sù* perspective (at Santa Maria di Campagna,

[54] See Martin Kemp, "'Equal excellences': Lomazzo and the explanation of individual style in the visual arts," pp. 1-26.
[55] Lomazzo, *Idea del Tempio della Pittura* (1590), in *Scritti sulle arti*, ed. Roberto Paolo Ciardi, 2 vols. (Florence: Marchi & Bertolli, 1973), I, p. 278.

Piacenza).[56] In the *Idea del Tempio*, Pordenone is identified (along with Tintoretto, Veronese, the Palmas, the Bassani, Federico Barocci, and Simone Peterzano) as a follower of Titian, Giorgione, and Correggio.[57] The subsidiary position and cursory treatment of Pordenone's works is most probably due to Lomazzo's reliance on Vasari's and Dolce's characterizations of him. However, there is some indication that Lomazzo may have once held Pordenone in higher esteem. Having worked at the convent of Sant'Agostino in Piacenza, Lomazzo knew Pordenone's works firsthand and the vaults he painted in the Foppa Chapel at the Milanese church of San Marco reveal close study of Pordenone's prophets and sibyls from the central cupola of Santa Maria di Campagna. Beyond practical emulation, Lomazzo's appreciation of the artist is made quite explicitly in his *Libro de sogni* (ca. 1563). Written in his mid-twenties, Lomazzo's *Libro* records a series of fantastic conversations held between famous and fictional individuals who had been summoned to a marble fountain by a necromancer. Unfortunately, the text was left unfinished, but it records some of the author's early impressions. For example, in one of the fantasies Lomazzo has Leonardo da Vinci describe some of the greatest achievements of painting to the ancient sculptor Phidias. Here Pordenone is recognized as an artist "*di grandissima maraviglia*" even when compared to all others (which in this context includes the painters Correggio, Giulio Romano, Raphael, Barnazzano, and the Dossi).[58] This is because in Pordenone's many works "the figures appear to be in the round and of relief and not painted, as he was better than all other painters at making foreshortenings

[56] Pordenone is also listed among those painters that are good colorists and skilled at creating *cangianti* effects and painting children. Lomazzo, *Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scoltura et architettura*, II, pp. 176, 201, 235, 252, 260.
[57] Idem, *Idea del Tempio della Pittura*, I, p. 358.
[58] Idem, *Libro de sogni*, I, p. 112.

and horses well. And since he gave the greatest force and relief to his paintings, verily may he be counted among the most excellent painters who together, in universality, improved, as he has, painting."[59]

Such praise, expressed *in persona di* Leonardo da Vinci (another artist whose skill in depicting foreshortenings and horses was celebrated by the author) seems exceptional, but it is hardly original.[60] Indeed, Lomazzo appears to be doing little more than paraphrasing Vasari.[61] That said, the admiration conceded to Pordenone is significant because it represents an important early acknowledgement of the artist by a Lombard critic. As noted above, subsequent recognition of the painter by Lomazzo and his Lombard contemporaries would never be so generous. Given his reliance on Vasari, Lomazzo's early estimation of Pordenone's art is difficult to determine, but the surviving literary evidence suggests a discernible pattern of reception.

Pordenone's first appearance in sixteenth-century art literature is tied to the polemics surrounding the determination and appraisal of regional artistic values. His place within those disputes was dependent on the geographical perspective of the authors who participated in them. Vasari identified Pordenone as a participant in Venetian artistic culture and as Titian's chief rival. He then knowingly placed the painter distinctly below Tuscan artists like Domenico Beccafumi, the implication being that even the greatest rival of Titian was inferior to a Tuscan artist (one who did not even warrant his own

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[59] "*...le figure che appariscono essere tonde e di rilievo e non dipinte; come per aver lui, meglio de tutti gli altri pittori, fatto ben i scorti e cavalli; e per aver datto forza grandissima e rilievo alle sue pittore, mertittamente si può connumerar tra tutti gli piú eccellenti pittori che abino, in universale, augumentati, come egli fece, la pittura...''* Ibid.

[60] Cf. Idem, *Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scoltura et architettura*, II, p. 260.

[61] Cf. Vasari, *Le vite* (1550), ed. C. Ricci, IV, p. 238: "*Fece anco su'l canale grande, alla casa di certi gentilhuomini molte storie a fresco, dove si vede un Curzio a cavallo in iscorto, che pare tutto tondo et di rilievo*."

biography in the first edition of the *Lives*). In his 1557 rejoinder to Vasari, Dolce associated Pordenone's art with those values specifically linked to the art of Michelangelo, which he undermined for its limited scope and propriety (he only excels in difficult foreshortenings and muscular nudes). Having characterized Pordenone in nearly identical terms, Dolce scapegoated the painter to the advantage of Titian and, by extension, the Venetian tradition that Titian's art embodied. The artistic values that these early Tuscan and Venetian critics associated with Pordenone (*scorti*, *rilievo*, *disegno*) largely determined the ways in which later critics would characterize his art as well as his marginal place within the various canons of art that subsequent polemicists professed. However attractive his art was to patrons of the *pianura padana*, Pordenone's status as a nonlocal painter and continuous itinerancy preempted the paltry consideration he later received from Lombard critics. Unbound to a single place of production, Pordenone's reputation was undermined by exclusion, minimization, and displacement in the service of local patriotism.

It has recently been argued that Vasari viewed the sporadic movement of art and artists from region to region as a threat to the memory of art's origins.[62] Beyond origins, it can also be averred that artistic mobility unmotivated by cultural or political colonization and whose products transcend geographic affiliation is easily forgotten. As David Kim has recently argued, the mobility of art runs directly counter to the spatial mnemonics that informed so much of early modern thought.[63] The method of loci or topical memory devices advocated in rhetorical treatises from Cicero's *De Oratore* to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and so on was pervasive in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century

[62] Kim, *The Traveling Artist in the Italian Renaissance*, pp. 40-41.
[63] Ibid.

Italy.[64] For those committed to fixing knowledge to place, paintings that resist association with the artistic values of a single location presented a real problem. Objects that muddle the distinction between "being of here" and "being of there" can be manipulated to serve the ends of either position or simply displaced according to the agenda of the critic. Writers like Lamo, who deliberately overlooked the importance of Pordenone's art for the Lombard painters of his generation, tacitly consent to appropriation without accreditation; the art of the Campi, for example, appears to rely only on indigenous artistic precedent. When taken to extremes, as in the exclusion of Pordenone from the treatises by other Lombards, such as Gregorio Comanini and Antonio Campi, the results depopulate the history of art.

The religious works that Pordenone produced in the Friuli, Cremona, and Piacenza demonstrate just how fragile a fiction the bond between personal identity and regional style really was. It is perhaps ironic then that the pursuit of regional stylistic differentiation and the consequent taxonomies of artistic values it generated ran parallel to the growing appreciation for aesthetics of eclecticism. Already articulated by Pino in 1548 when he claimed "if Titian's color were added to Michelangelo's design, it could be called the god of painting," the appeal and practice of an eclectic program, which underlies Pordenone's contaminate strategies of imitation, would be transformed and granted new impetus by the Carracci family in their reform of painting.[65]

Beyond aesthetic concerns and stylistic polemics, the foregoing chapters have also demonstrated how the range of imitative reference that underlies Pordenone's clamorous paintings addresses theological imperatives and encourages reflection on the

[64] See also Parshall, "The Art of Memory and the Passion," *Art Bulletin*, v. 81, n. 3 (1999), pp. 456-472.
[65] Pardo, *Paolo Pino's* Dialogo di pittura, p. 358.

boundaries between different modes of religious image-making and their respective possibilities for stimulating devotional affect. The transgressive tactics that subtend Pordenone's altarpieces, the mimetic violence of his murals in Cremona, and the rhetoric of abundance that activates the expressive flexibility of his Piacentine cupola: in each case, Pordenone developed distinct modes of contaminate painting that not only provide aesthetic alternatives, but insist upon the power of art's fictions to animate divine truth and open new lines of spiritual self-inquiry.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1. Map of Pordenone's activity in the Friuli and Eastern Veneto

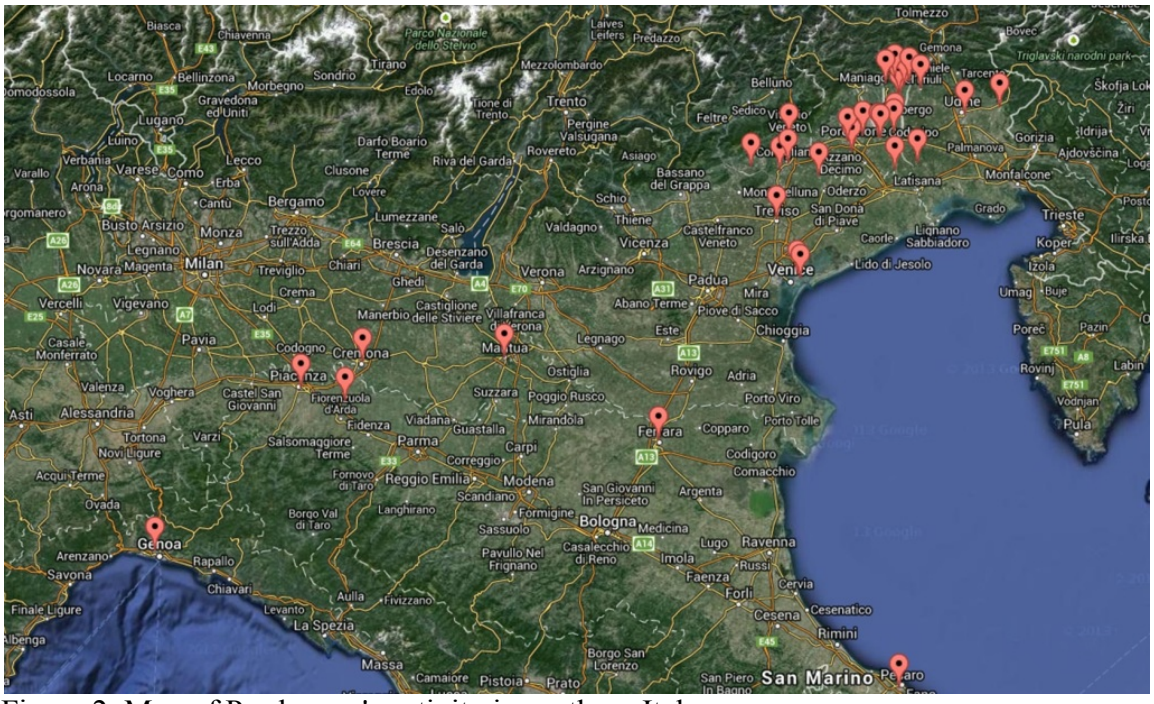

Figure 2. Map of Pordenone's activity in northern Italy

Figure 3. Map of Pordenone's activity in Italy


Figure 4. Pordenone, Vault, Intrados, Walls (c. 1508), fresco, Vacile, San Lorenzo, Choir

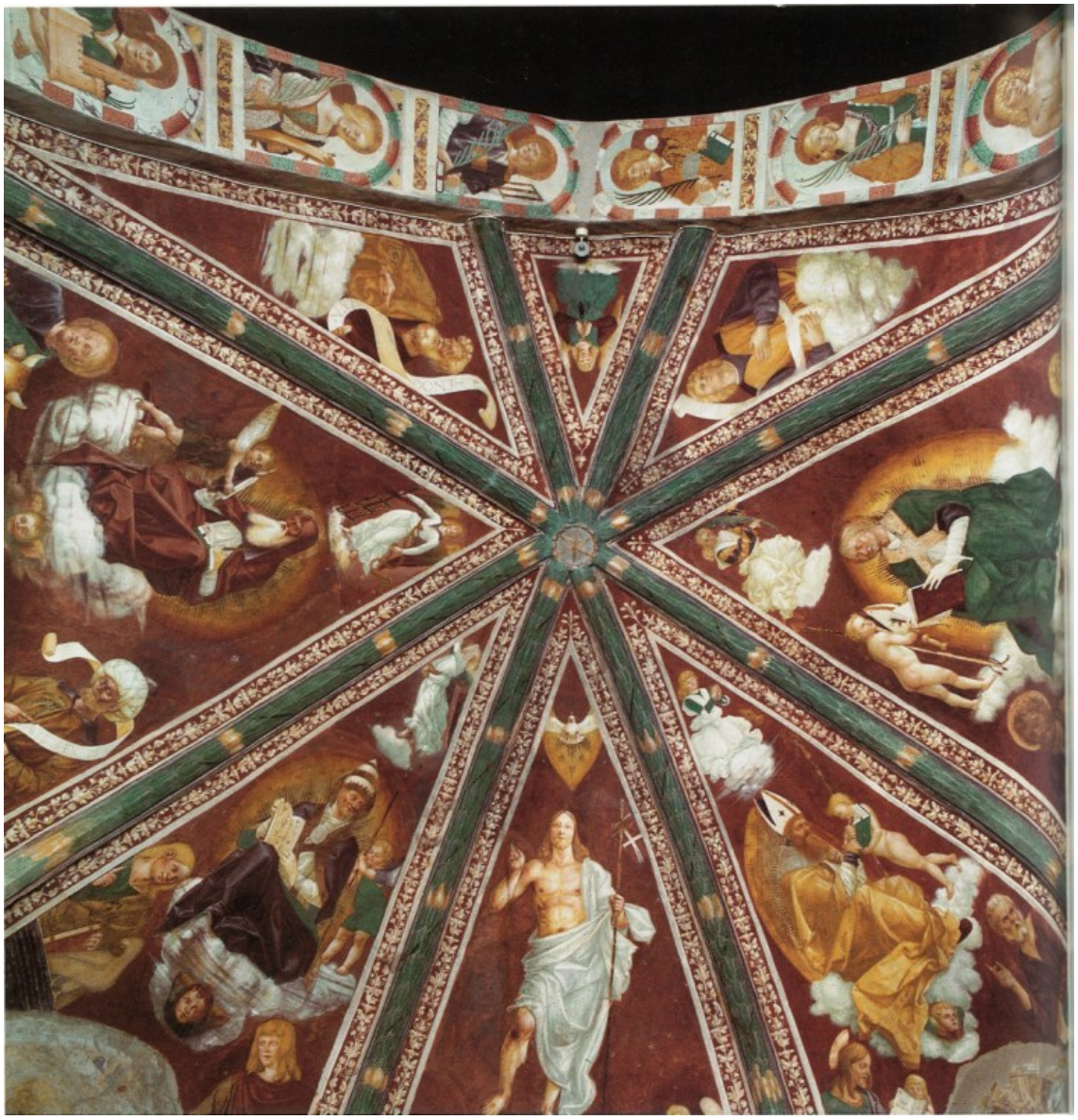

Figure 5. Pordenone, Vault (c. 1508), fresco, Vacile, San Lorenzo, Choir

Figure 6. Pordenone, Cupola with *God the Father and Angels* (1520), fresco, Treviso, Duomo, Malchiostro Chapel (destroyed)

Figure 7. Malchiostro Chapel (1519-1520), Treviso, Duomo

Figure 8. Titian, *Annunciation* (1519-1520), oil on canvas, Treviso, Duomo, Malchiostro Chapel

Figure 9. Pordenone, *Adoration of the Shepherds* (1520), fresco, Treviso, Duomo, Malchiostro Chapel

Figure 10. Pordenone, *Madonna della Misericordia* (1515-1516), oil on canvas, Pordenone, Duomo di San Marco

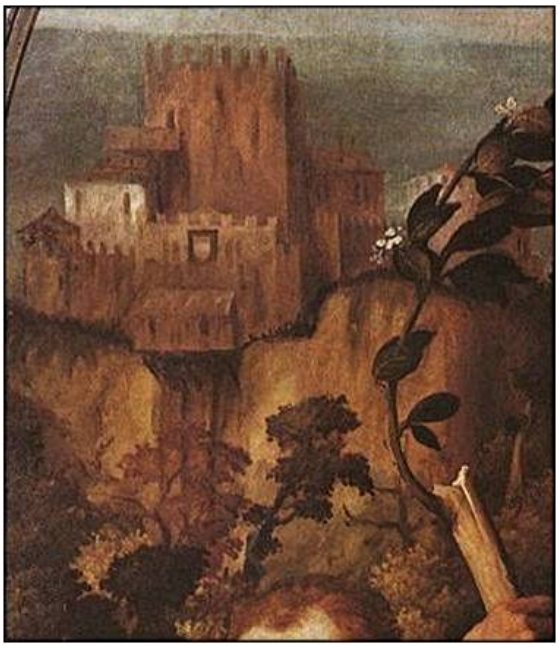

Figure 11. Detail of sewage trails. Pordenone, *Madonna della Misericordia* (1515-1516)

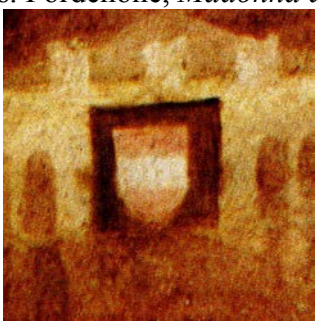

Figure 12. Detail of the city of Pordenone's Hapsburgian coat of arms. Pordenone, *Madonna della Misericordia* (1515-1516)

Figure 13. Detail of the scorched field. Pordenone, *Madonna della Misericordia* (1515-1516)

Figure 14. Detail of head of Saint Christopher. Pordenone, *Madonna della Misericordia* (1515-1516)

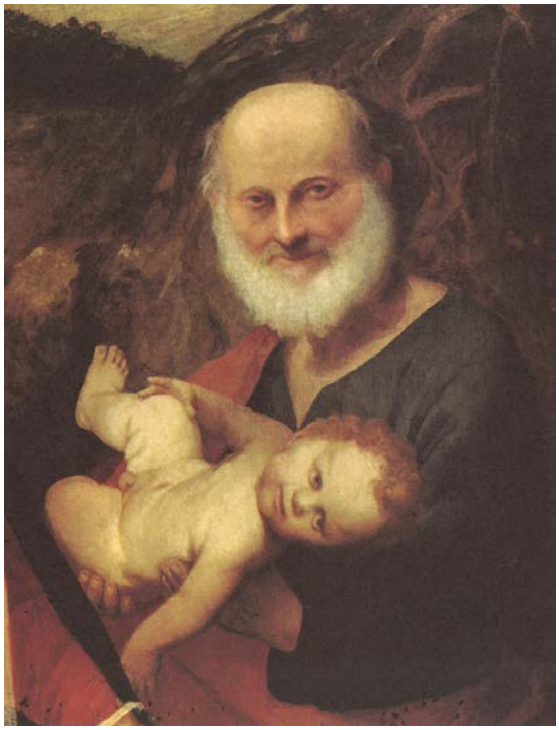

Figure 15. Detail of Saint Joseph holding the Christ Child. Pordenone, *Madonna della Misericordia* (1515-1516)

Figure 16. Cargnellutto and family. Pordenone, *Madonna della Misericordia* (1515-16)

Figure 17. Detail of Shepherds. Pordenone, *Madonna della Misericordia* (1515-1516)

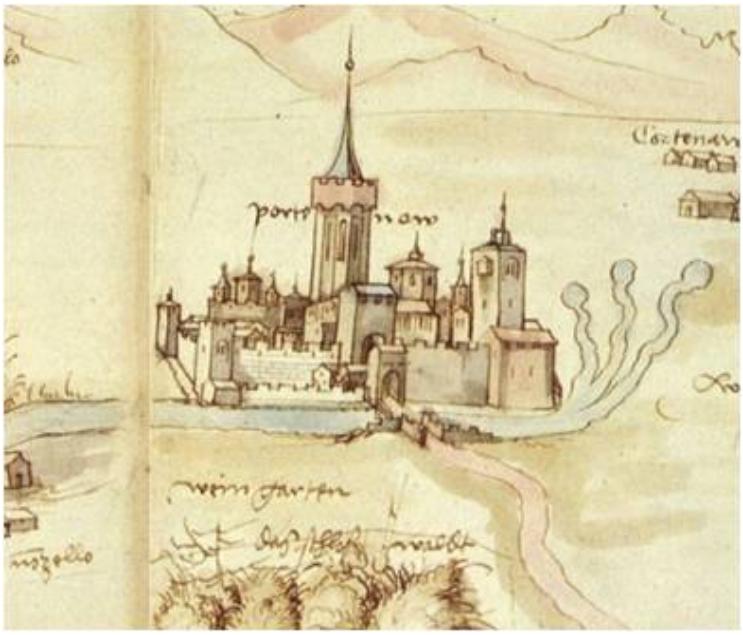

Figure 18. Jörg Kölderer, *La terra di Pordenone imperiale* (ca. 1509), manuscript


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Bartholomeus Liuianus.

IN BARTHOLOMEO Liuiano ſicuti nos vidimus, & ex hac vera imagine coniectari licet, quanquam ab humili corporis ſtatura, ac ignobili ſub agreſtis acerbiſque oris ductu nullum ipſo dignum perſonæ decus emineret; viuidi tamen & peracres oculi, innatæ virtutis indices, quantum excelſo efficacique ingenio valeret, facile oſtendebant. Neque enim illuſtri ſanguine, neque opulentis parentibus vti apud Albianum tenue Tuſciæ oppidum natus erat; ſed aſcitus a Virginio Vrſino tanquam impiger, & maximè fidus cliens adoptiua nobilitate præſtantique militiæ ſtudio clarus, ad ſummos honores aſcenderat. Nactus ſiquidem valde opulentum, ingentiſque famæ auidum Romanæ militiæ magiſtrum, pertinaci induſtria, ſingulariſque labore, & incredibili vigilantia, aditum ſibi ad militaris imperij nomen patefecit. Nam poſt Gallos ad Atellam Apulam,

Figure 19. Paolo Giovio, *Bartolomeo d'Alviano* in *Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium* (Basil: Pietro Perna, 1575)

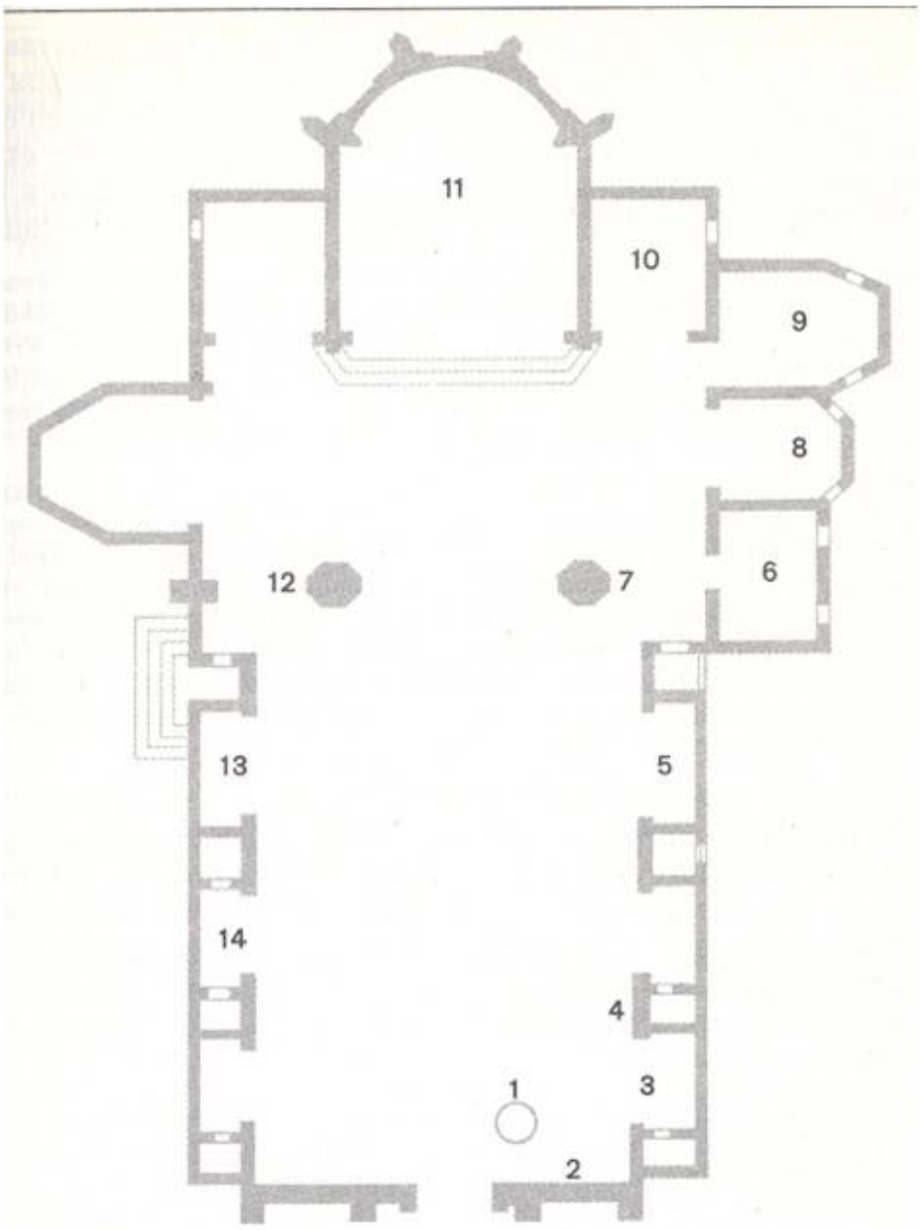


Figure 20. Duomo di San Marco, Pordenone. Ground plan. Current location of the *Madonna della Misericordia* is denoted by the number three.

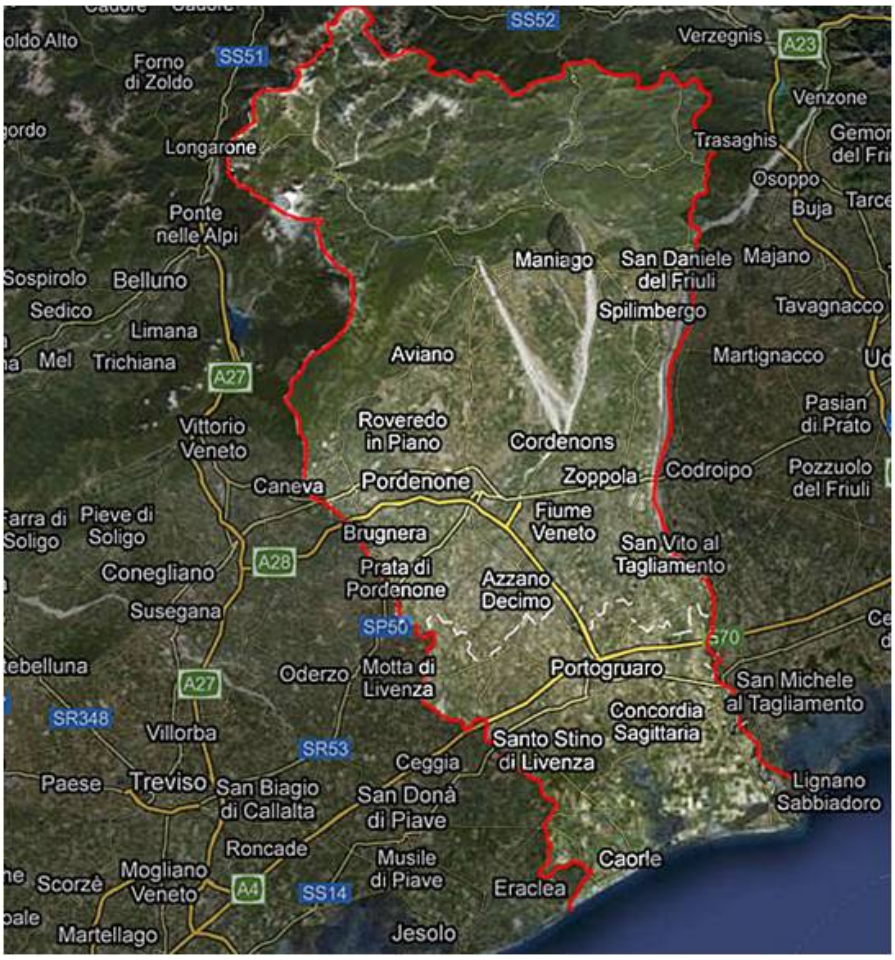
Figure 21. Giovanni Battista Bettini da Portogruaro, *Altare di San Giuseppe o della Misericordia* (1771), marble frame, Pordenone, Duomo di San Marco

Figure 22. Dario Cerdonis da Pordenone, *Vergine del Patrocino with Saints John the Baptist and Bernardino*, 15th century, Bassano, Museo Civico

Figure 23. Pordenone, *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints Sebastian, Rupert, Leonard and Roch* (ca. 1514), oil on canvas, Vallenoncello, Chiesa di Santi Ruperto e Leonardo

Figure 24. Pordenone, *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Sts Peter, Prosdocimus, Barbara, Catherine* (1511), oil on panel, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia

Figure 25. Pordenone, *Saint Roch with Saints Jerome and Sebastian* (ca. 1510-1511), oil on panel, Venice, Chiesa di Santa Maria della Salute



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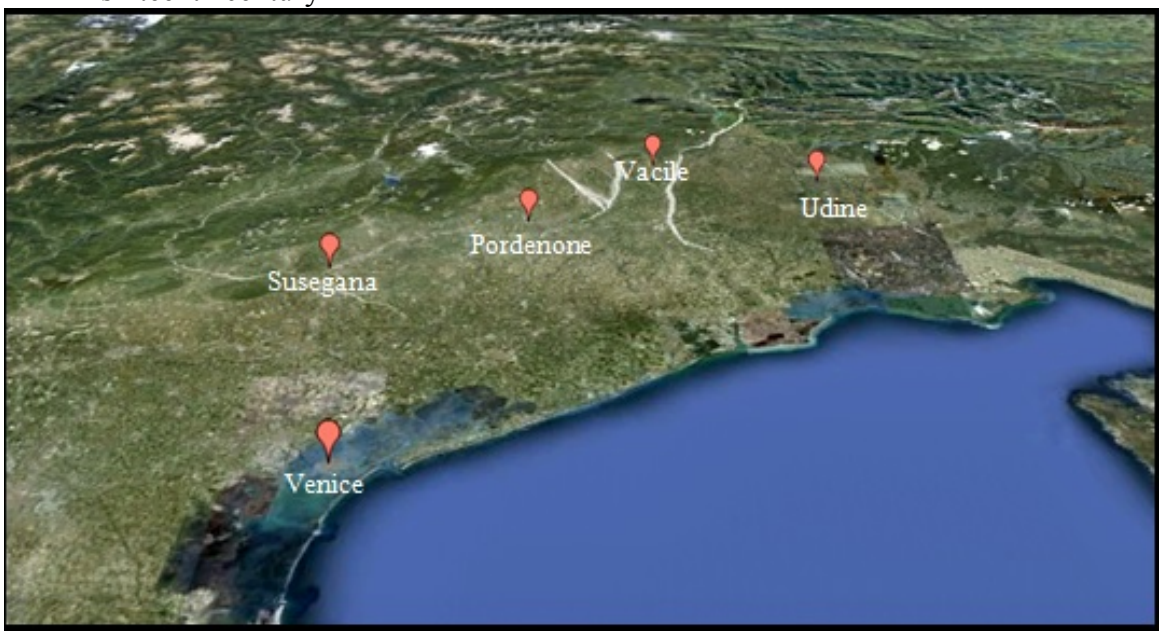

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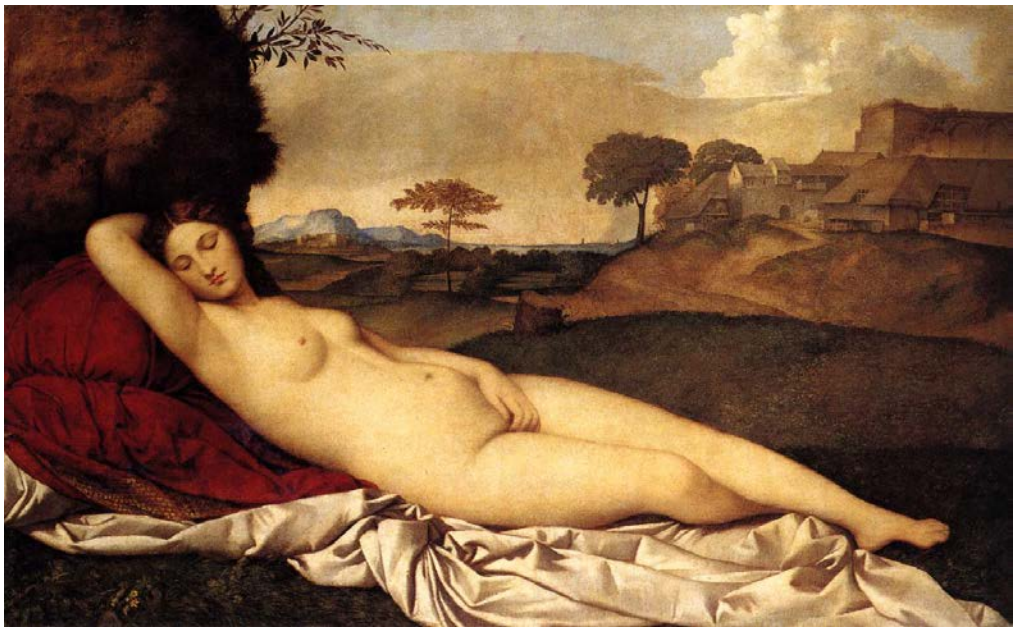

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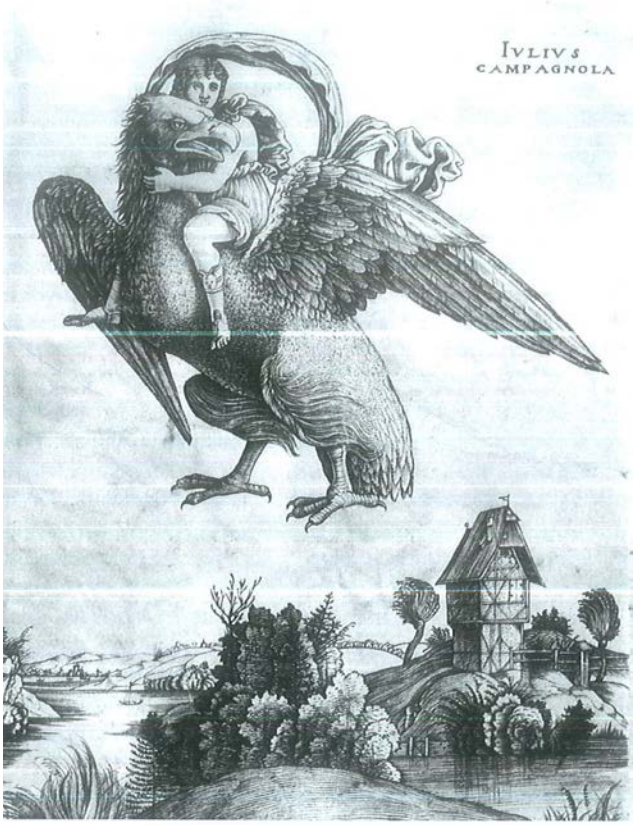
Figure 38. X-radiograph. Pordenone, *Madonna della Misericordia* (ca. 1515-16)



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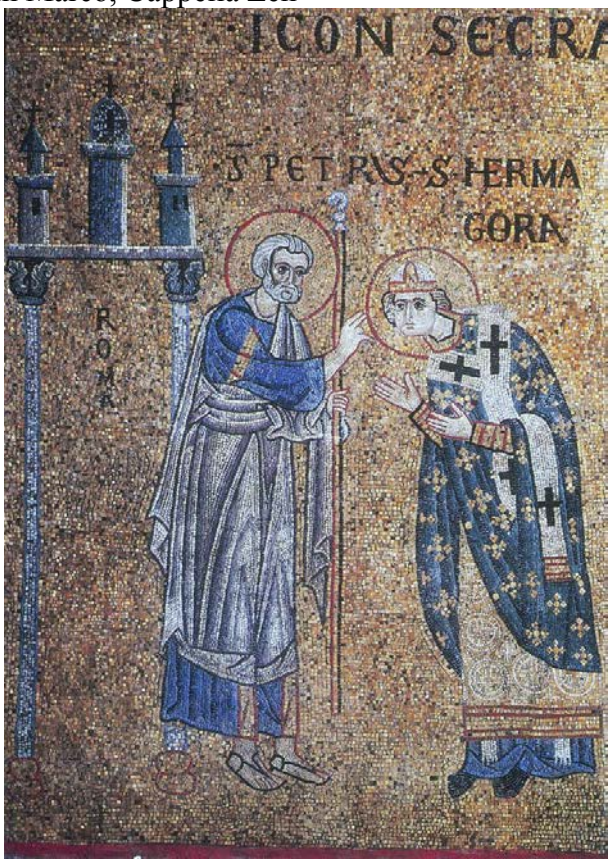

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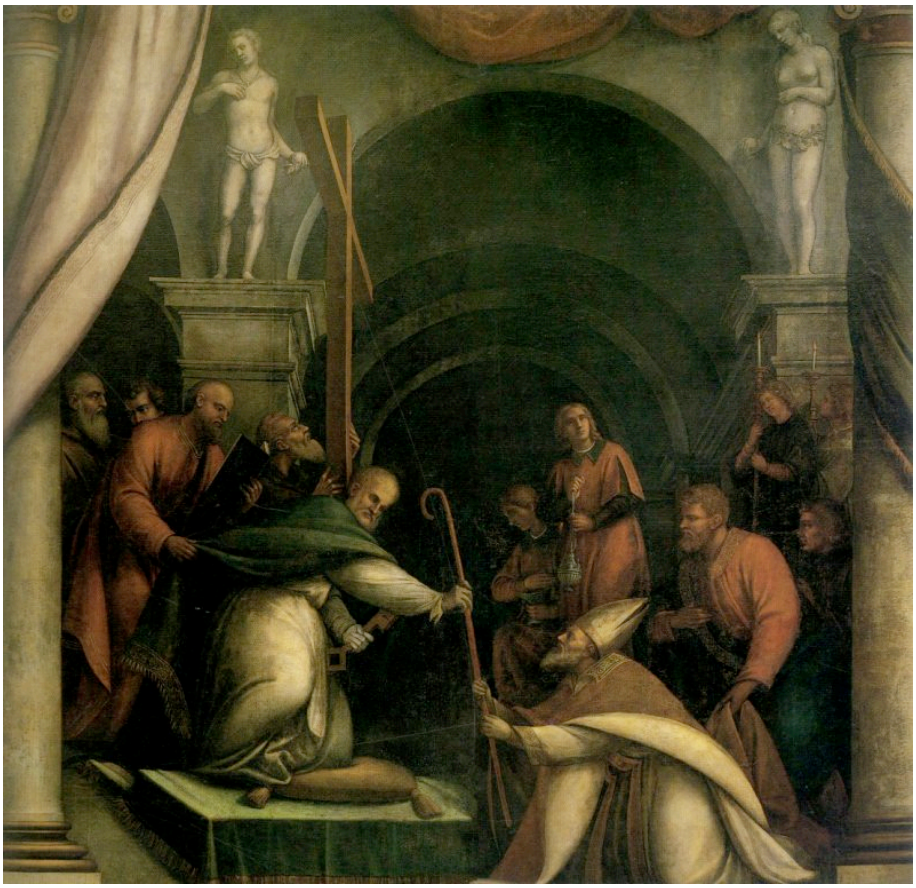

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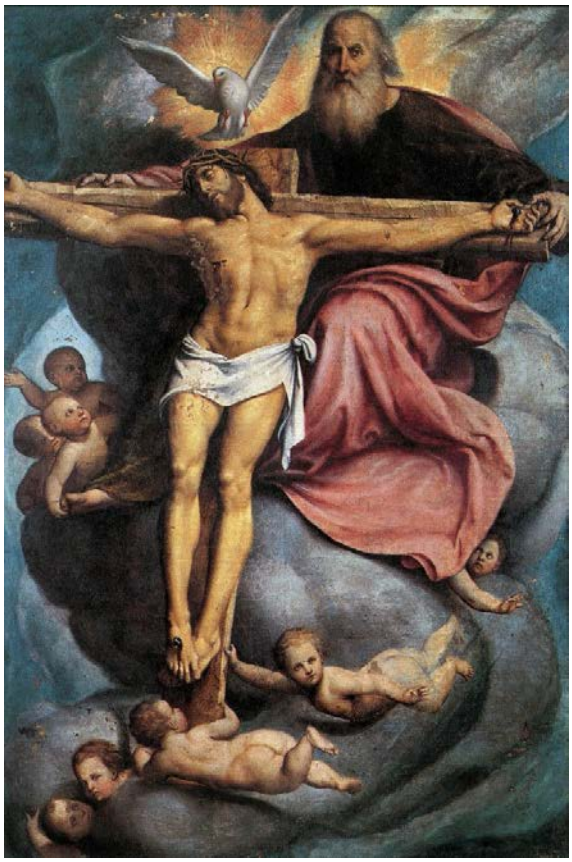
Figure 67. Pordenone, *Noli me Tangere with Donor* (ca. 1534), oil canvas, Cividale, Museo Archeologico



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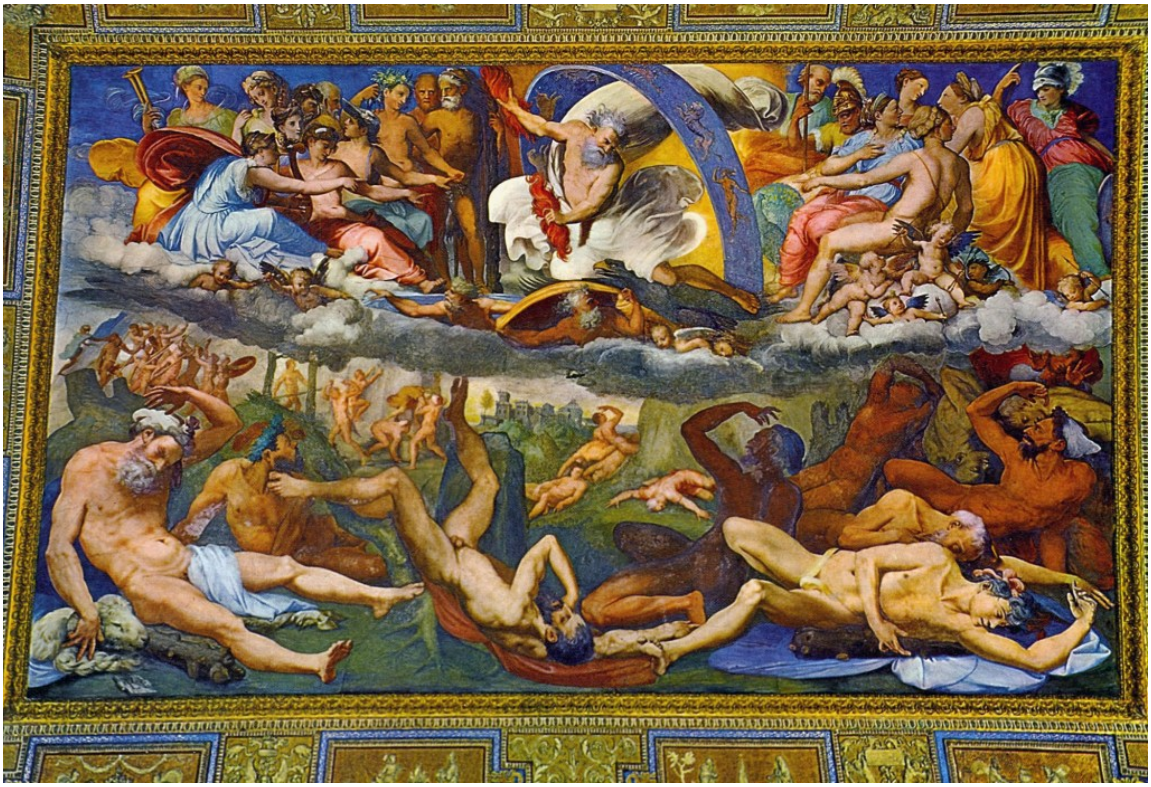

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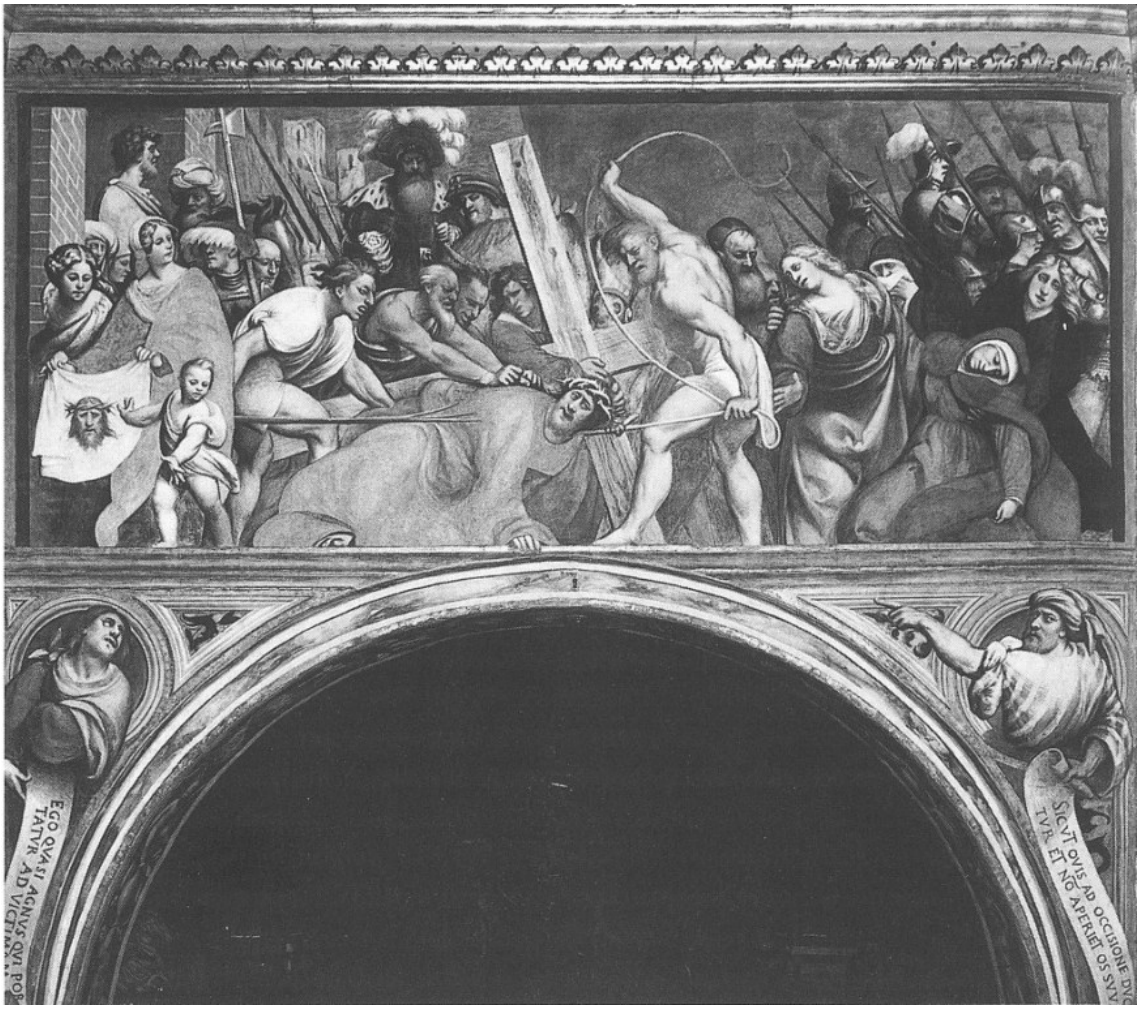

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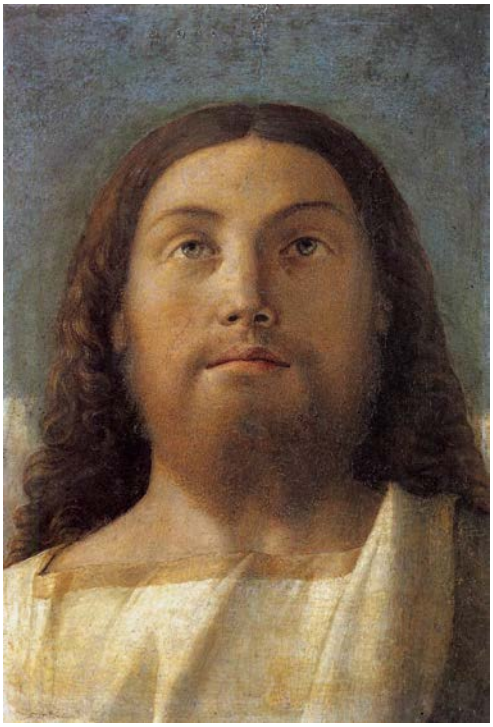
Figure 83. Anonymous, *Crucifix* (14th century), polychrome wood, Cremona, Baptistery



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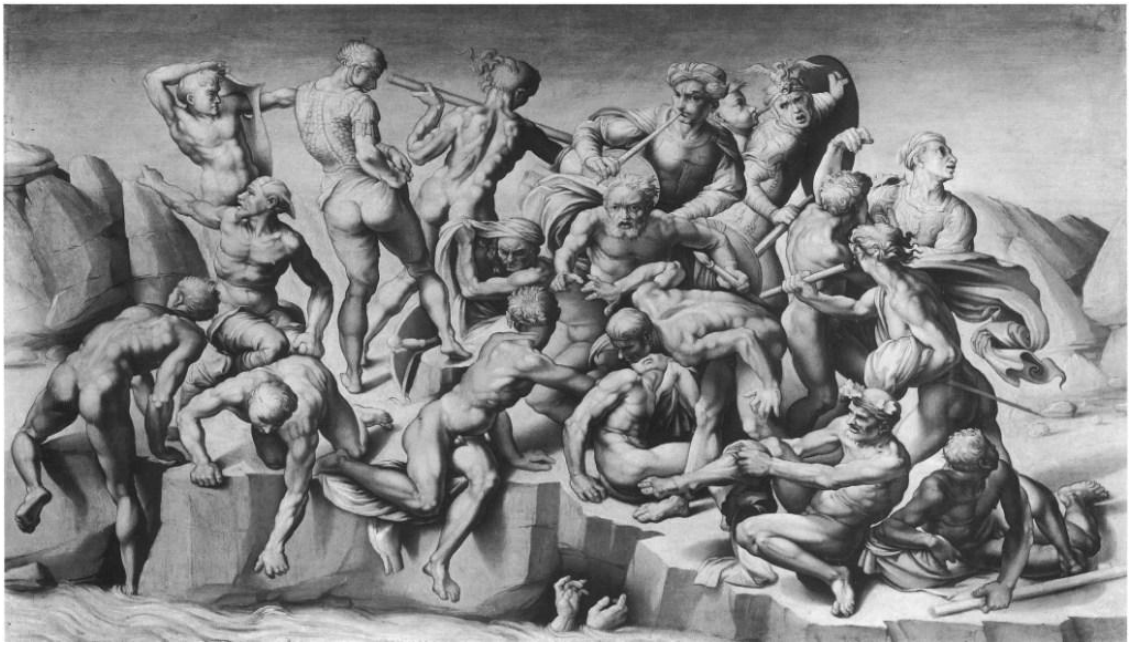

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Figure 96. Cristoforo Magnani, *Prophet* (begun 1573), located under Boccaccio Boccaccino's *Circumcision*, fresco, Cremona, Duomo

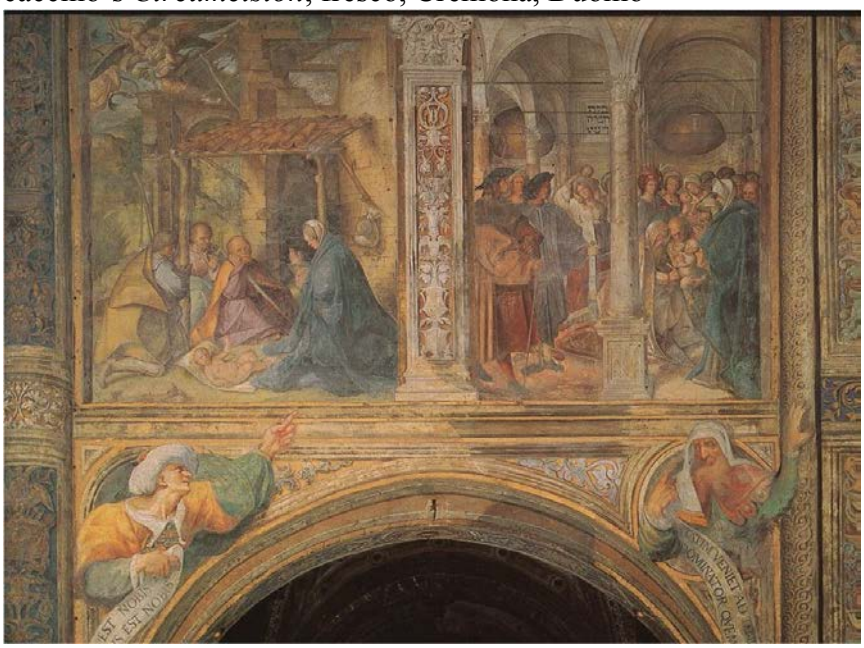

Figure 97. Cristoforo Magnani, *Prophets* (begun 1573), located under Boccaccio Boccaccino's *Adoration of the Shepherds* and *Circumcision*, fresco, Cremona, Duomo

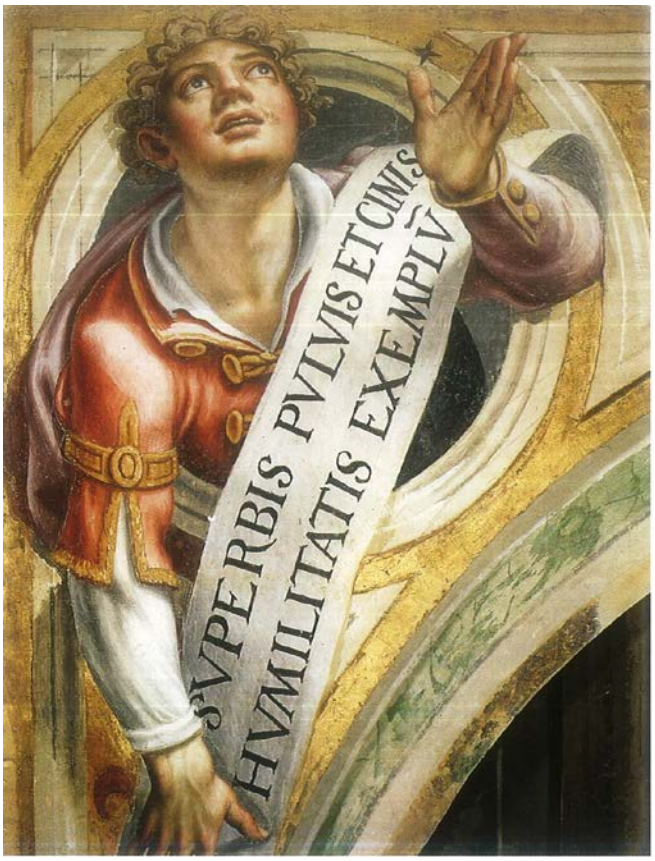

Figure 98. Vincenzo Campi, *Prophet* (begun 1573), located under Altobello Melone's *Washing of the Feet*, fresco, Cremona, Duomo

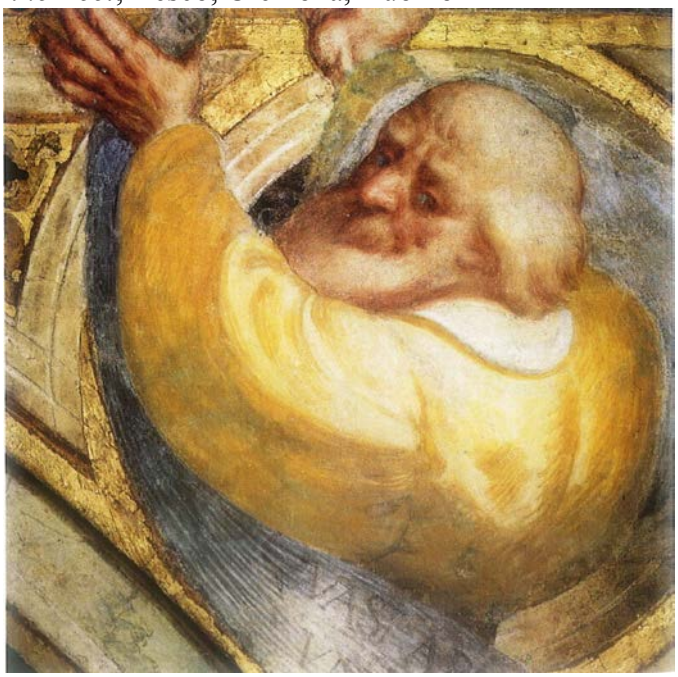

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Figure 102. Detail of Christ (foot). Pordenone, *Fall on the Way to Calvary* (1520), fresco, Cremona, Duomo

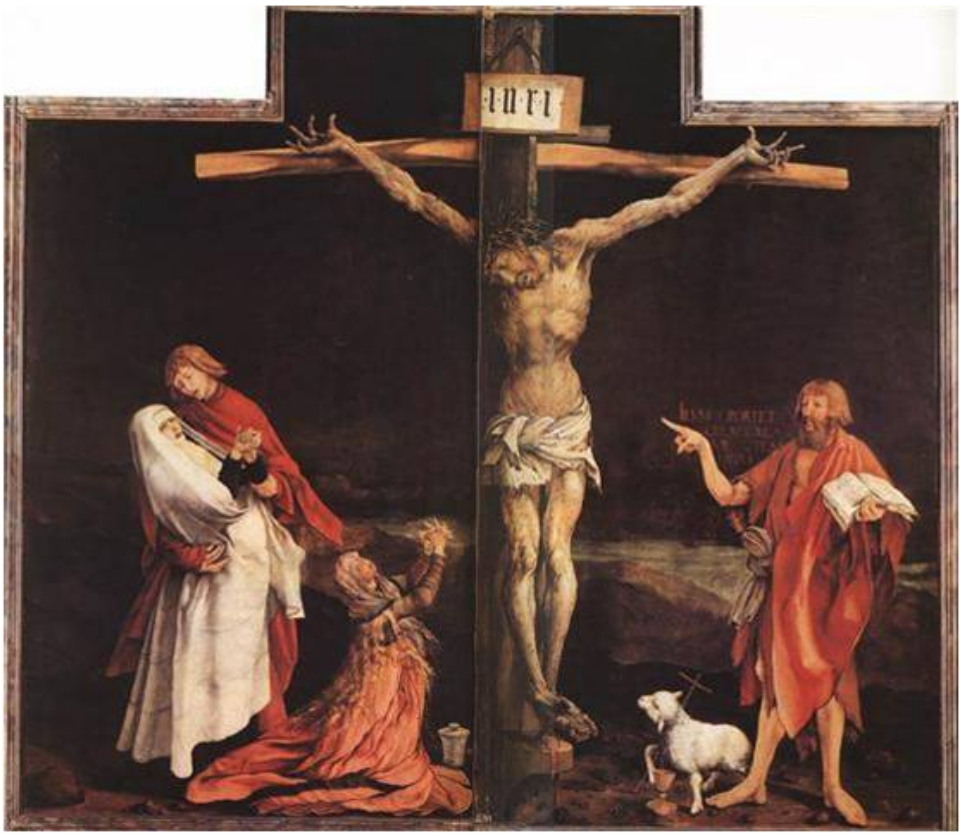

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Figure 104. Albrecht Dürer, *Christ Carrying the Cross* (1512), engraving

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Figure 112. One head growing from another. Pordenone, *Christ before Pilate* (1520), fresco, Cremona, Duomo

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Figure 114. Christ's arm or Simon's garment. Pordenone, *Fall on the Way to Calvary* (1520), fresco, Cremona, Duomo

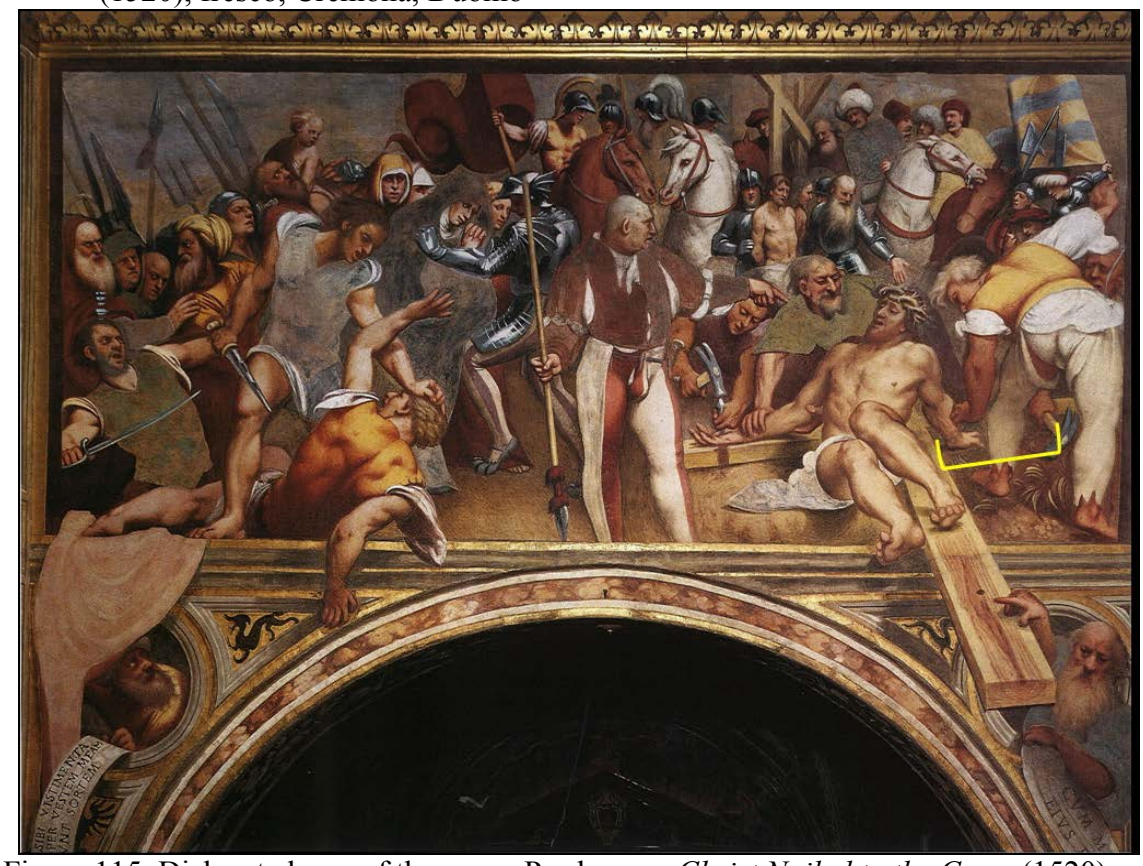

Figure 115. Dislocated arm of the cross. Pordenone, *Christ Nailed to the Cross* (1520), fresco, Cremona, Duomo

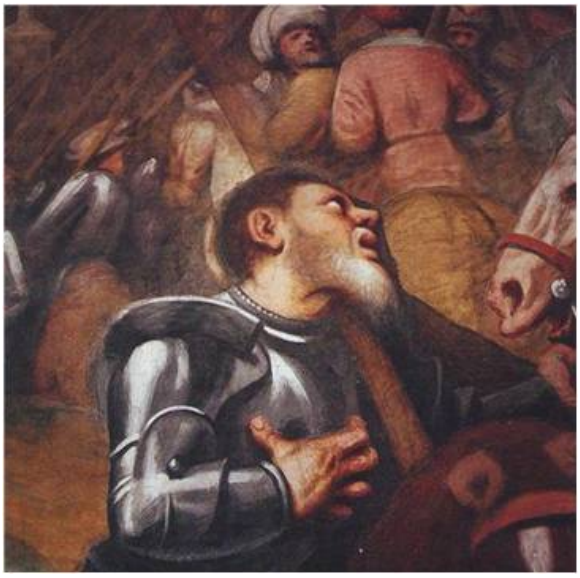

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Figure 117. Giovanni Bellini, *San Giobbe Altarpiece* (ca.1487), oil on panel, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia

Figure 118. Giovanni Bellini, *San Zaccaria Altarpiece* (1505), oil on canvas, Venice, Chiesa di San Zaccaria

Figure 119. Sebastiano del Piombo, *Saints Louis of Toulous and Sinobaldus* (ca. 1509), oil on canvas, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia

Figure 120. Bernardino Gatti, *Resurrection* (1529), fresco, Cremona, Duomo

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Figure 122. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532), fresco, Piacenza, Chiesa di Santa Maria di Campagna

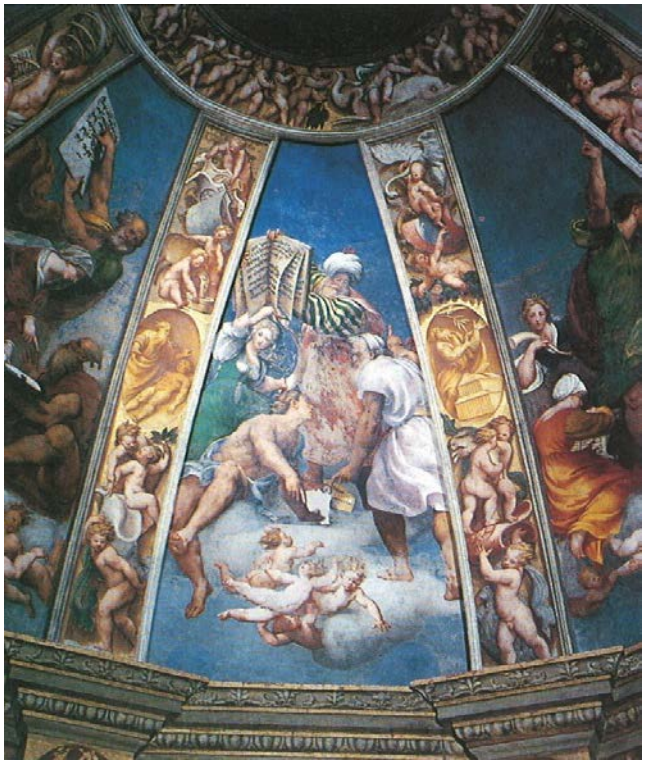

Figure 123. West octant. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-32), Piacenza, Santa Maria di Campagna

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Figure 129. South octant. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532), fresco, Piacenza, Chiesa di Santa Maria di Campagna

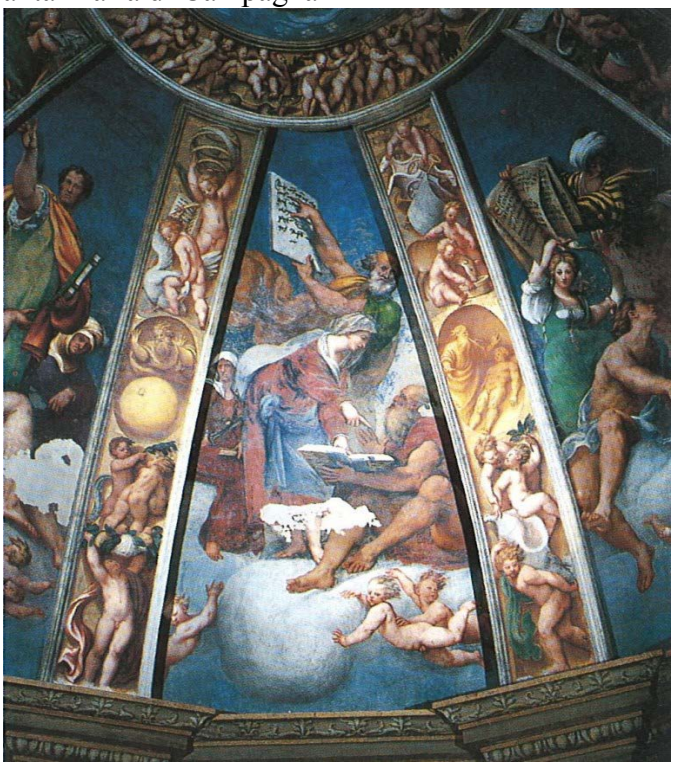

Figure 130. Southwest octant. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532), fresco, Piacenza, Chiesa di Santa Maria di Campagna

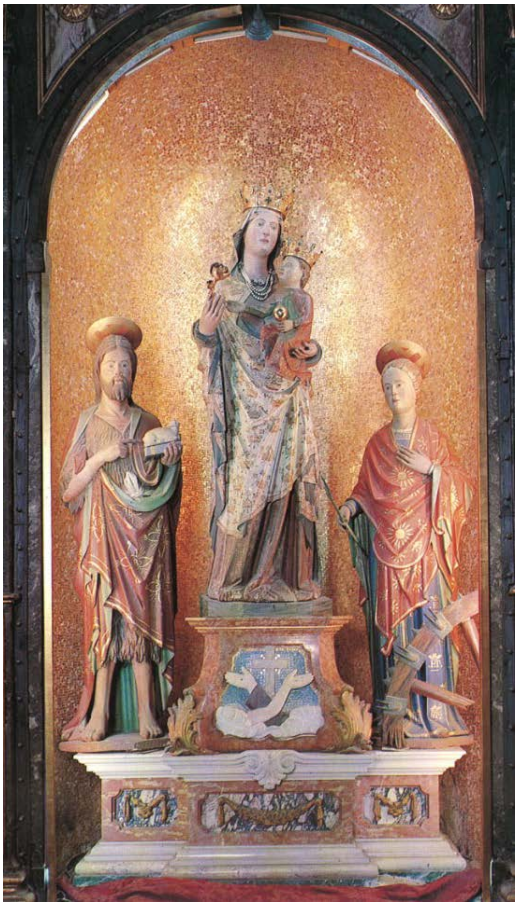

Figure 131. Anonymous, *Madonna di Campagna* (14th century) *with John the Baptist and Catherine of Alessandria* (15th century), polychrome wood, Piacenza, Sana Maria di Campagna, high altar

Figure 132. Anonymous (copy after original), *Votive of Clement VII* (1727), papier-mâché, Piacenza, Chiesa di Santa Maria di Campagna

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Figure 136. Correggio, *Assumption of the Virgin* (1526-1530), fresco, Parma, Duomo

Figure 137. Alternate view. Correggio, *Assumption of the Virgin* (1526-1530), fresco, Parma, Duomo

Figure 138. Alessio Tramello, *Chiesa di Santa Maria di Campagna* (1522-1528), Piacenza

Figure 139. Detail of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, Cesare Cesariano's translation of Vitruvius, *De Architectura* (1521), woodcut

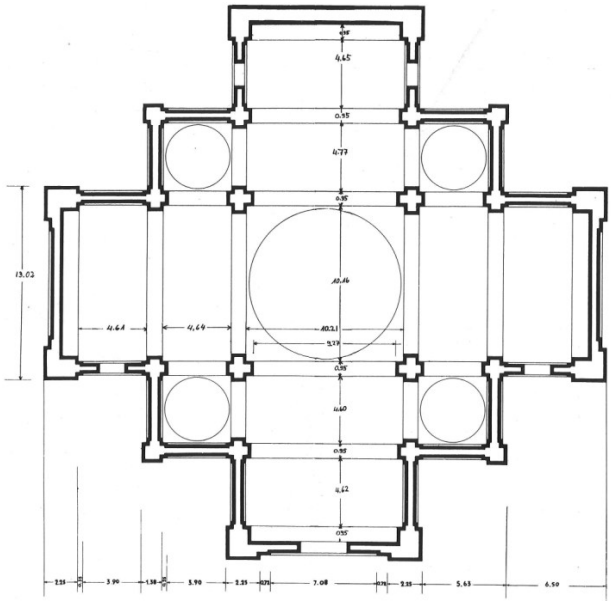

Figure 140. Reconstruction of Tramello's original ground plan for Santa Maria di Campagna

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Figure 144. Detail of oculus. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532), fresco, Piacenza, Chiesa di Santa Maria di Campagna

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Figure 146. Rib with *Creation of the Universe*. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)
Figure 147. Rib with *Creation of Adam*. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

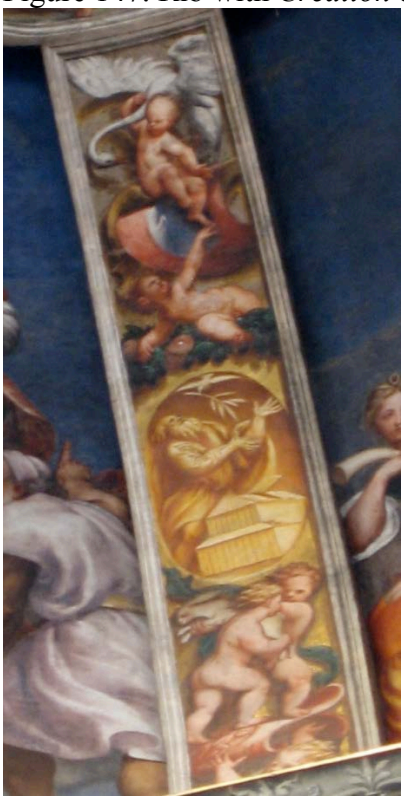

Figure 148. Rib with *Noah's Ark*. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)
Figure 149. Rib with *Sacrifice of Isaac*. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

Figure 150. Rib with *Joseph Sold into Bondage*. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)
Figure 151. Rib with *Moses Receiving the Law*. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

Figure 152. Rib with *David Defeating Goliath*. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)
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Figure 154. *Rape of Europa* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

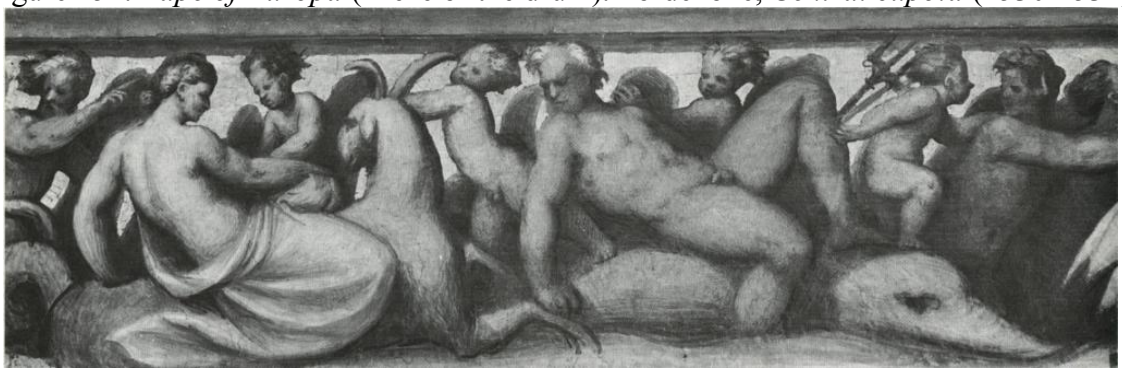

Figure 155. *Neptune and Amphitrite* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

Figure 156. *Venus and Adonis* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

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Figure 158. *Battle of the Gods and Giants* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

Figure 159. *Labors of Hercules* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

Figure 160. *Procession with Bacchus* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

Figure 161. *Procession with Silenus* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)


Figure 162. *Castor and Pollux at the Battle of Lake Regillus* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

Figure 163. *Virginius Kills His Daughter* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)


Figure 164. *Supplication of the Sabine Women* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

Figure 165. *Naval Battle of Cynegeirus* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)


Figure 166. *Proof of the Innocence of the Vestal Tuccia* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

Figure 167. *Battle of Marcus Valerius Corvus* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)


Figure 168. *Justice of Trajan* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

Figure 169. *Tomyris beheading Cyrus* (frieze of the drum). Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

Figure 170. Pordenone, *Saint Augustine Enthroned with Angels* (ca. 1533-1535), fresco, Piacenza, Chiesa di Santa Maria di Campagna

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Figure 173. Bernardino Gatti, Scenes from the *Life of the Virgin* (1543), fresco, Piacenza, Santa Maria di Campagna

Figure 174. Michelangelo, Ceiling of the Cappella Sistina (1508-1512), fresco, Vatican, Musei Vaticana

Figure 175. Raphael, *Sistine Madonna* (1512-1513), oil on canvas, Dresden, Gemäldegalerie

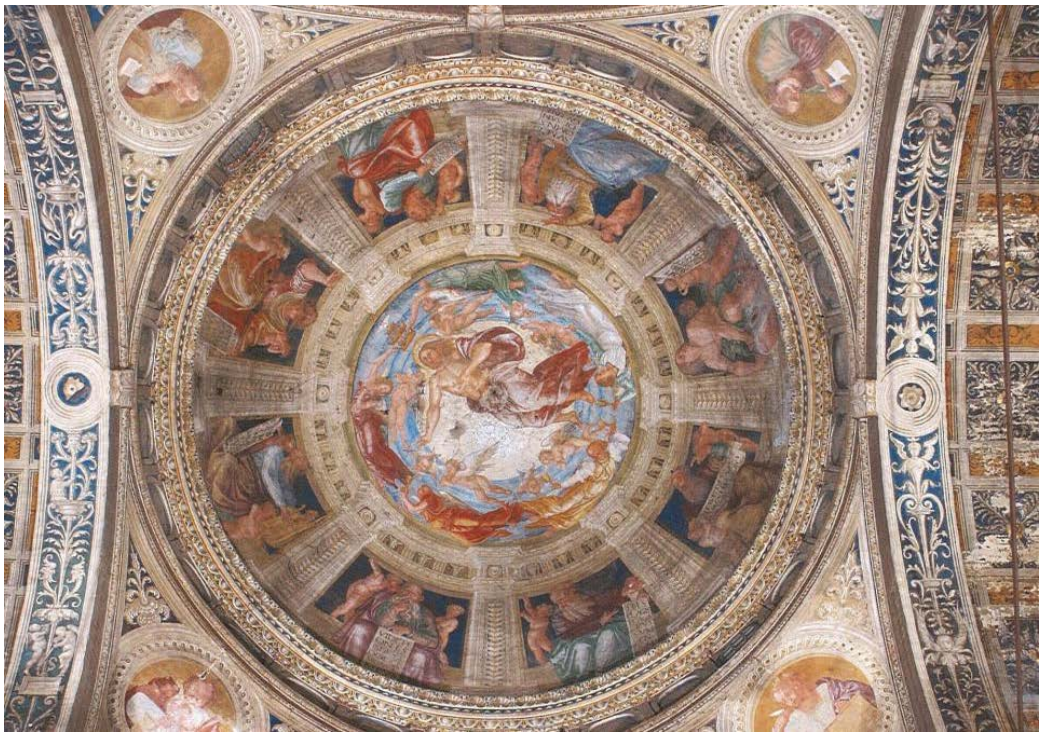

Figure 176. Bernardino Zacchetti, *Christ in Glory* (1517), fresco, Piacenza, Chiesa di San Sisto

Figure 177. Alternate view. Bernardino Zacchetti, *Christ in Glory* (1517), fresco, Piacenza, Chiesa di San Sisto

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Figure 179. Melozzo da Frolì, *Vault with Prophets and Angels* (1482-1484), fresco, Loreto, Santa Casa, Sacristy of Saint Mark

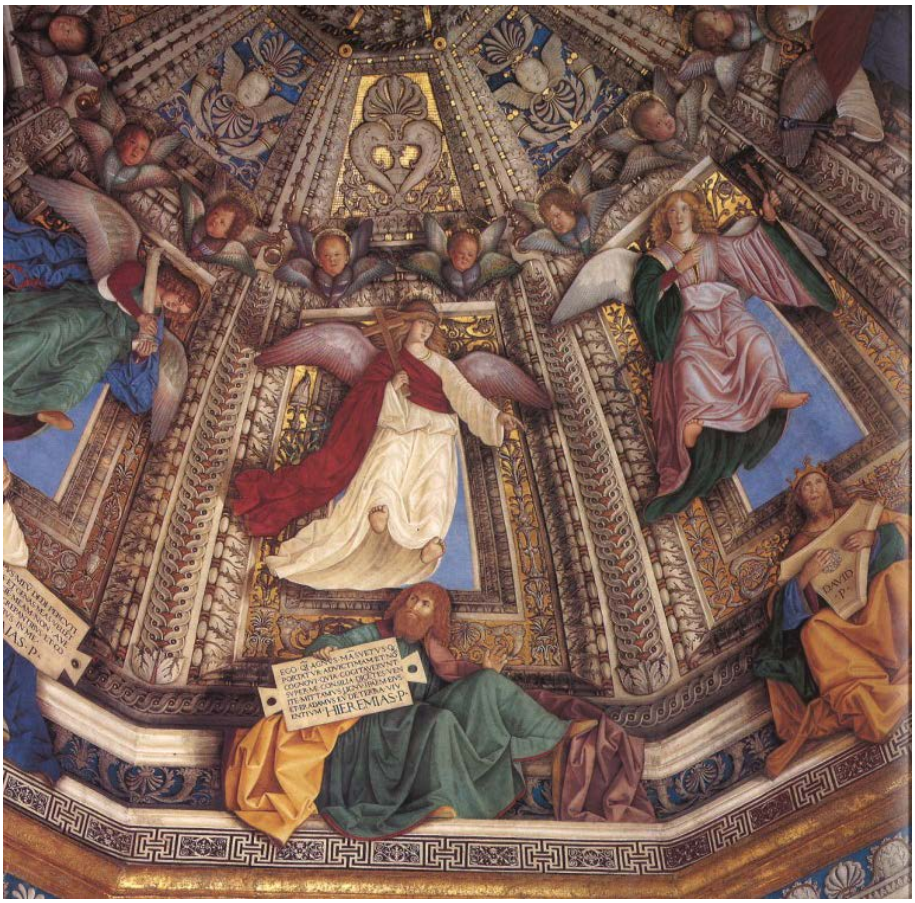

Figure 180. Detail with Jeremiah and David. Melozzo da Frolì, *Vault with Prophets and Angels* (1482-1484)

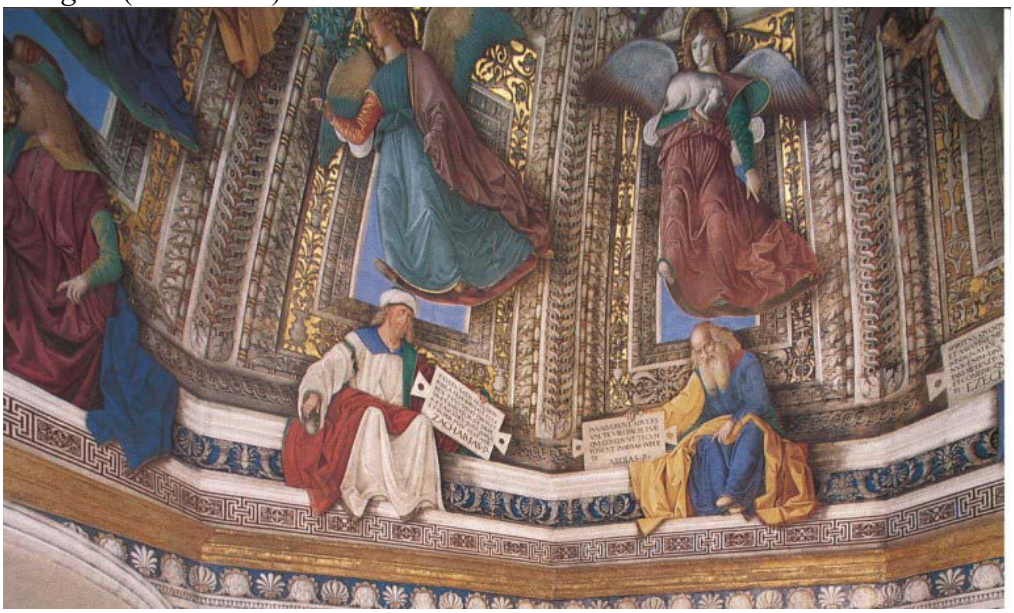
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Figure 182. Pordenone, *Cupola with God the Father and Angels* (1519), fresco, Treviso, Cappella Malchiostro (destroyed)

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Figure 184. Alternate view. Correggio, *Assumption of the Virgin* (1526-1530), fresco, Parma, Duomo

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Figure 187. Attributed to Titian, *Christ Carrying the Cross* (ca. 1510) with Lunette, workshop of Titian (1519)


Figure 188. Detail of frightened putto. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)
Figure 189. Detail of putto and ape. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532)

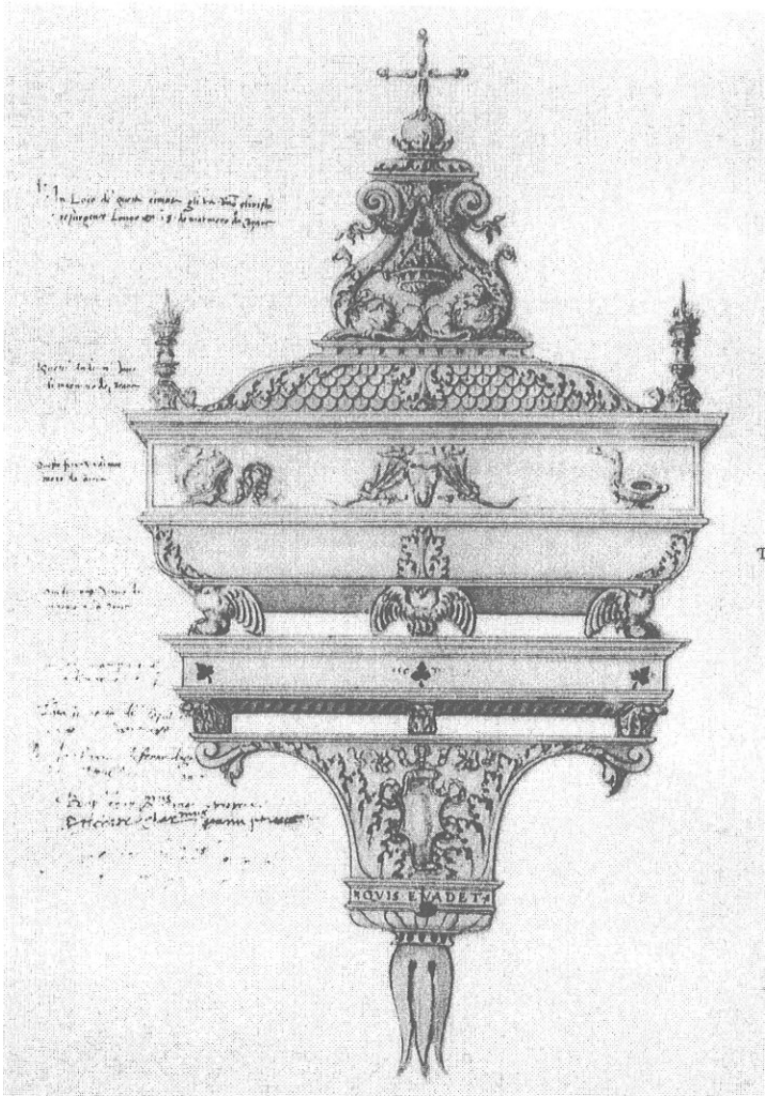

Figure 190. Anonymous, *Design for Canon Carissimi's Sepulcher* (ca. 1520), ink on paper, Parma, Archivio Notarile Distrettuale

Figure 191. Francesco Colona, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499), Hieroglyphic, woodcut, Venice, Aldus Manutius

Figure 192. Correggio, *Aaron with the Flowering Rod* and *Moses before the Burning Bush* (1520s), fresco, Parma, Chiesa di San Giovanni Evangelista, crossing arch

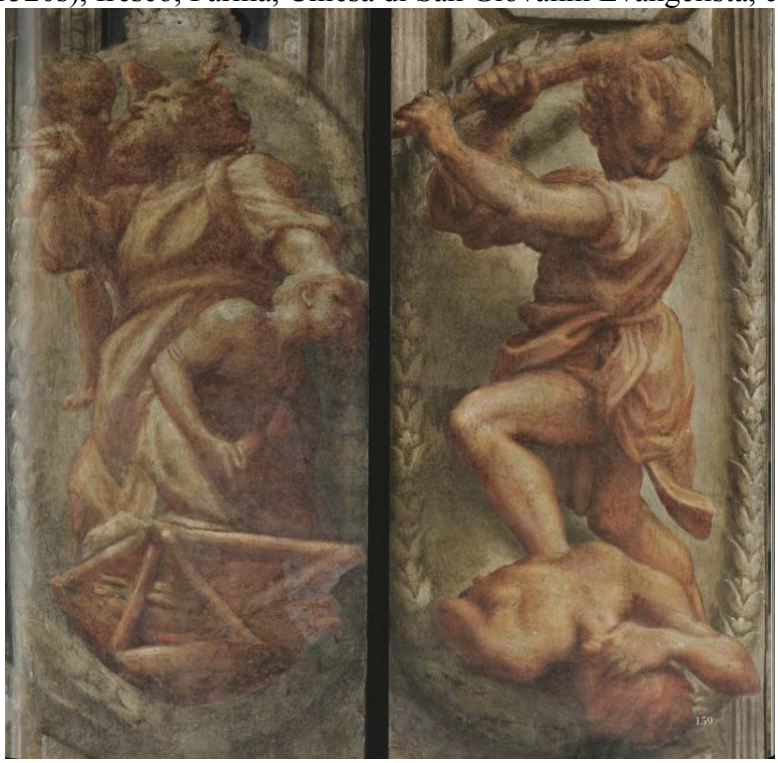

Figure 193. Correggio, *Sacrifice of Isaac* and *Cain Killing Abel* (1520s), fresco, Parma, Chiesa di San Giovanni Evangelista, crossing arch

Figure 194. Correggio, *Jonah and the Whale* and *Samson Uprooting the Gates of Gaza* (1520s), fresco, Parma, Chiesa di San Giovanni Evangelista, crossing arch

Figure 195. Correggio, *Enoch Taken to Heaven* and *Elijah on the Fiery Chariot* (1520s), fresco, Parma, Chiesa di San Giovanni Evangelista, crossing arch

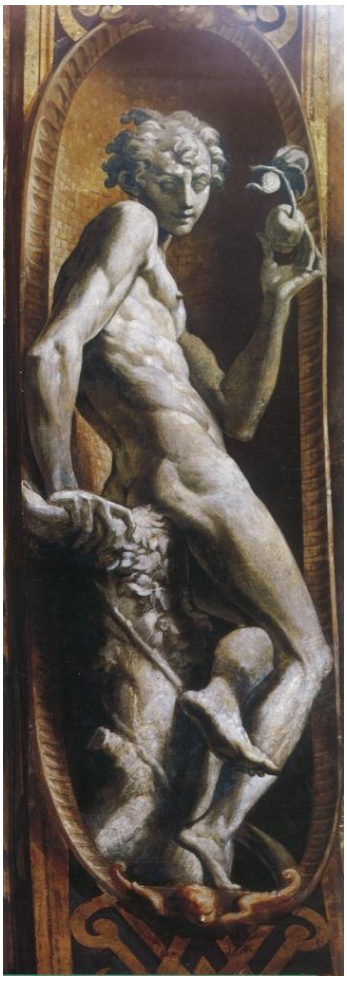

Figure 196. Parmigianino, *Adam* (1531-1539), fresco, Parma, Basilica di Santa Maria della Steccata

Figure 197. Michelangelo Anselmi, *David* (1540s-1550s), fresco, Parma, Basilica di Santa Maria della Steccata

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Figure 199. Bernardino Gatti, *Temptation* (1540s), fresco, Piacenza, Santa Maria di Campagna, crossing arch

Figure 200. Parmigianino, *sott'arco* (ca. 1522-1523), fresco, Parma, Chiesa di San Giovanni Evangelista, Cappella Monastero (second chapel on the left)

Figure 201. Detail of Arch. Parmigianino, *sott'arco* (ca. 1522-1523), fresco, Parma, Chiesa di San Giovanni Evangelista, Cappella Monastero (second chapel on the left)

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Figure 203. Parmigianino, *sott'arco* (ca. 1522-1523), fresco, Parma, Chiesa di San Giovanni Evangelista, Cappella Monastero or Cappella di Santa Gertrude (first chapel on the left)

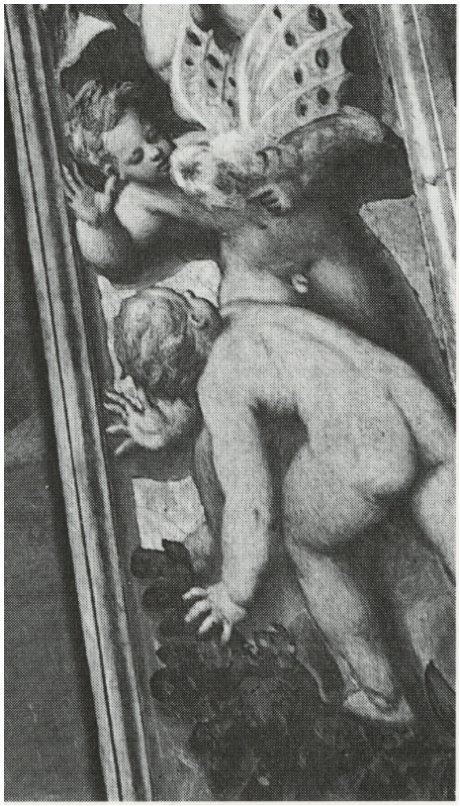

Figure 204. Detail of putto. Parmigianino, *sott'arco* (ca. 1522-1523), fresco, Parma, Chiesa di San Giovanni Evangelista

Figure 205. Detail of putto. Parmigianino, *sott'arco* (ca. 1522-1523), fresco, Parma, Chiesa di San Giovanni Evangelista

Figure 206. Detail of putto. Pordenone, *Central cupola* (1530-1532), fresco, Piacenza, Chiesa di Santa Maria di Campagna

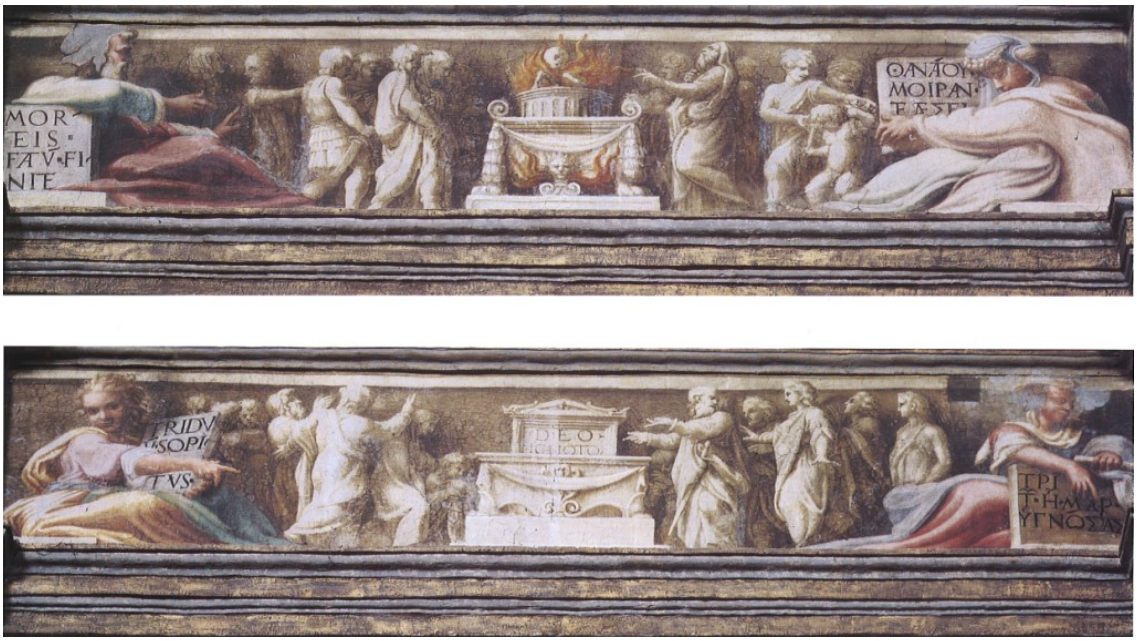

Figure 207. Correggio, *Prophets and Sibyls* (1520s), fresco, Parma, Chiesa di San Giovanni Evangelista, Nave

Figure 208. Parmigianino, *sott'arco* (1531-1539), fresco, Parma, Basilica di Santa Maria della Steccata, high altar

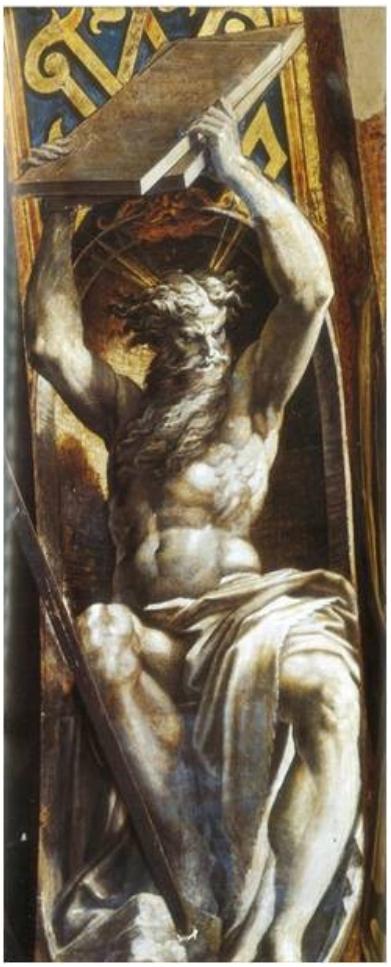

Figure 209. Detail of *Moses*. Parmigianino, *sott'arco* (1531-1539), fresco, Parma, Basilica di Santa Maria della Steccata, high altar

Figure 210. Detail of *Aaron*. Parmigianino, *sott'arco* (1531-1539), fresco, Parma, Basilica di Santa Maria della Steccata, high altar

Figure 211. Cross-spatial correspondence between Pordenone's frescoes and the *Madonna di Campagna*

Figure 212. Detail of text fragment. Pordenone, *Saint Augustine Enthroned with Angels* (ca. 1533-1535)

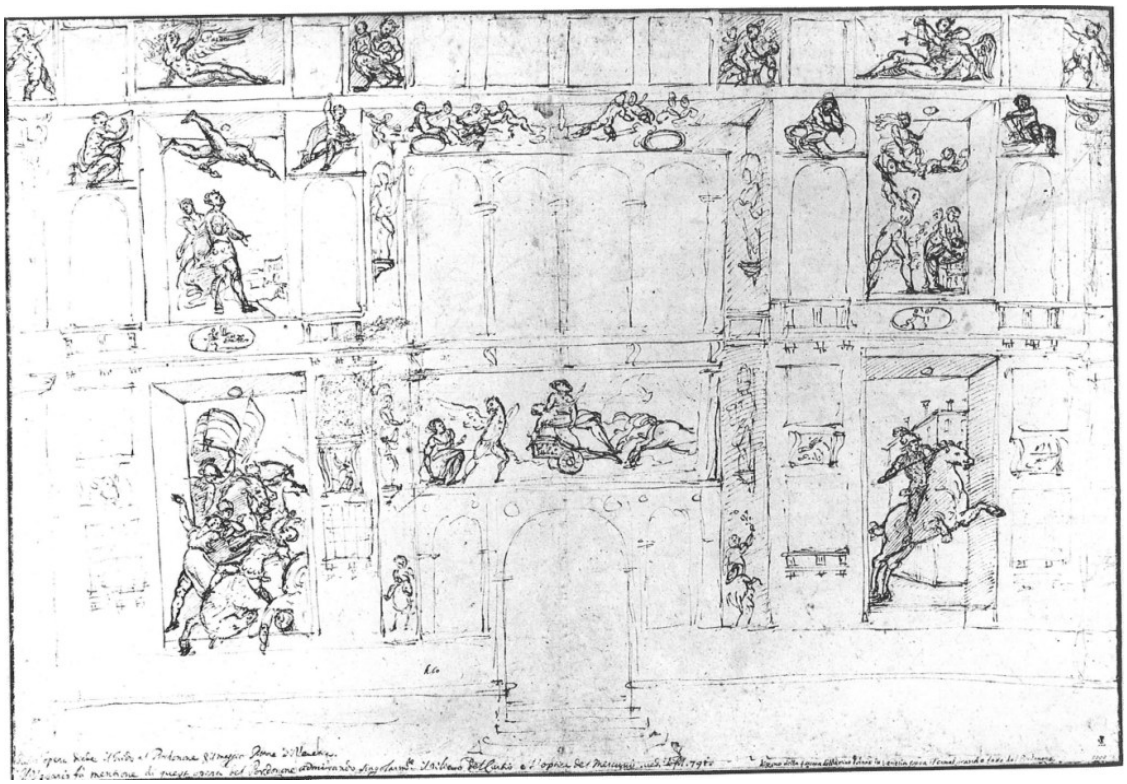

Figure 213. Pordenone, Study for the facade of the Palazzo d'Anna, c. 1535, pen and brown ink, London, Victoria and Albert Museum

Figure 214. Pordenone, *Sacripante Defeated by Love* (1536), woodcut, frontispiece, Lodovico Dolce's *Il primo libro di Sacripante*

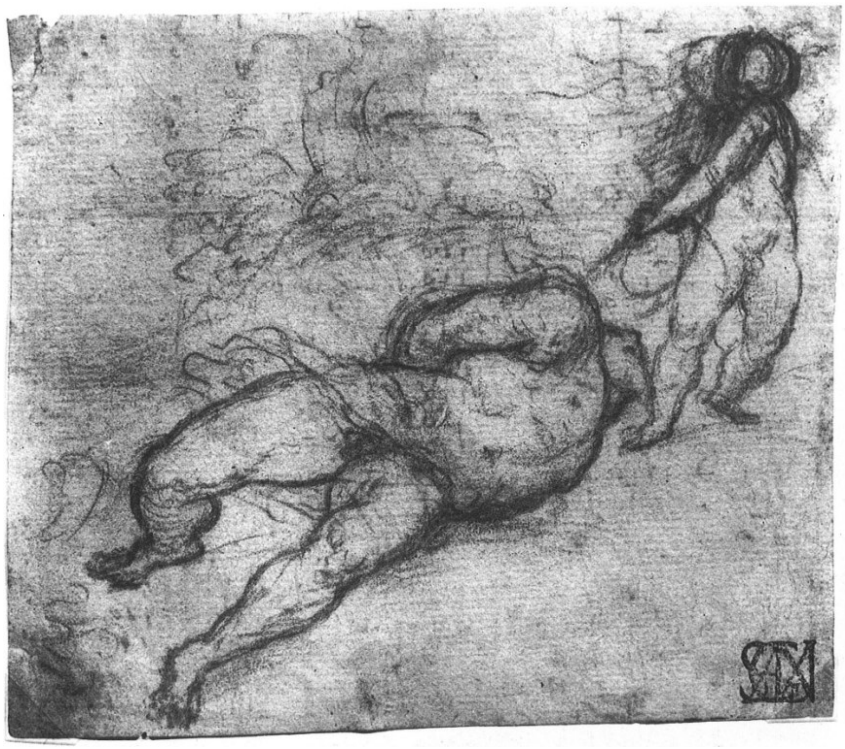

Figure 215. Pordenone, Study for *Sacripante Defeated by Love* (1536), Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana

Figure 216. Raphael (designer), *Conversion of Saint Paul*, 1519, tapestry (after drawing), Vatican, Musei Vaticana

Vita

Jason Di Resta was born on January 24th 1980 in Newburyport, Massachusetts. He graduated from Kenyon College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art History in May 2002. He earned a Master of Arts degree in the History of Art from Syracuse University in 2005. Jason became the Own Scholars Fellow in the History of Art Department at Johns Hopkins University in 2006 and began work on his dissertation in the fall of 2008. While in residence at Johns Hopkins Jason was the recipient of a Cazel Fellowship, a Carrie M. Kurrelmeyer Fellowship, two summer travel fellowships from the Charles S. Singleton Center, and the Katzenellenbogen Memorial Prize. Jason also received a Dean's Teaching Fellowship. In 2010 Jason was awarded a Samuel H. Kress Pre-Doctoral Fellowship by the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. This fellowship enabled him to conduct research at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence and various other institutions overseas. While pursuing his doctorate Jason taught several courses for Johns Hopkins University and lectured for Florida State University and Syracuse University. In 2013 Jason returned to the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts to act as research assistant to the Edmond J. Safra Visiting Professor. His dissertation was defended in the History of Art Department at Johns Hopkins University in May of 2015. Jason is currently a Research Associate in the Italian Paintings Department at the National Gallery of Art.